

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1903.

## JOHN MAXWELL'S MARRIAGE.

### CHAPTER I.

DOUROS HOUSE stood on Douros Bay, maybe two gunshots from the water, facing a little east of south ; so that in those long June days of northernmost Ireland the sun at his rising struck full on the great hall-door, and then, wheeling upward to his height, bathed all the broad south front of James Nesbit's new built dwelling for many pleasant hours before his westering took him to shine only on the rose garden, to which a French window opened from Mrs. Nesbit's boudoir. The place was a sun-trap. Set in the midst of a wide lawn, which a few sheep and innumerable rabbits kept trim and close cropped, the house was sheltered from east, north, and west by a crescent of hill, all overgrown with rough oak wood, except where prosperous plantation had raised up tall colonies of beech and silver fir. Full in front a screen of heavy sycamores was ranged along the skirts of the lawn and close down upon the water ; gaps among them left the view open, but whatever wind might sweep through across the bay was somewhat broken by noble groups of lime trees studded over the lawn. Only on the north-west was the close phalanx of woodland suffered to approach the house, for in that quarter the hill blocked the evening sun. Thus it was a

spot open yet secluded, a broad and sunny glade lying between mountain and sea-lough, with its outlook upon lawn, lough, and mountain. And that outlook, though it seemed so limited, was in reality strategically comprehensive, for except across the bay the eye saw only close green grass, broken by tufts and clumps of bracken with rabbits squatting or frolicking near by, and behind this foreground the rising brow of wood.

When James Nesbit, as was his custom many times in the day, stepped out on to the low paved flight of white stone steps at his hall door, and turning to the right levelled his long spyglass at the mountain side, some five miles distant across the bay, he commanded what was virtually the sole access to his fief. For there, winding down the slope of Slieve Alt, sharp eyes could detect on a clear day a grey ribbon of road, that, passing through the deep notch between Slieve Alt's peak and the rise of Aghla, traversed the great chain of mountains which follows the sea line in north Donegal a few miles from the coast. Roads are still few across that barrier ; and in those days, when George the Third was newly crowned, it was a long day's tramp westward from the shoulder of Slieve Alt to the nearest pass over which even a horseman might travel in safety. Beyond this

mountain barrier lay the arable lands of the Swilly watershed which had been deemed worthy of plantation ; here to the north was only a country of the mere Irish, marked at long intervals by the demesnes of their lords territorial. And of these demesnes that of Douros, lying on the sheltered side of the peninsula which flanks Douros Water on the west, was incomparably chief for beauty, fertility, and importance.

James Nesbit levelled his glass for the twentieth time that day and scanned the road. He was just come out from dinner, and with him were his wife, his daughter Mary, and a tall pleasant-looking young man, who kept close to the side of Mary and engaged her in laughing talk. By Mr. Nesbit stood an old, gray, lean servitor, who had just handed the telescope to his master.

" You saw no sign of any one, George ? " asked Mr. Nesbit, with the glass still at his eye.

" Not a hait, your honour. Four or five of them people out of Glen went down with creels of turf ; that was all there was in it."

Mr. Nesbit shut up the glass. "Leave her inside, George." Then, turning to his wife, he said : " There was no need for me to be troubling. Mansfield gave me his word that he would keep the officer to dinner with him this day, and would make sure that he took his skinfrl. I must go down to the pier and see how Andy is doing with the lading. Come you, too, Jack," he added to the young man ; " you aren't sworn of the peace yet. If you had been, I would have requested you to be somewhere else this afternoon. But, as you are a simple citizen, there's nothing to offend your conscience ; and it's always well to make acquaintance

with my friend Andy. You never can tell when you may want him."

" Poor Andy," said Mrs. Nesbit. " Is he coming on shore to you, or will you go out to him ? "

" Indeed, Mrs. Nesbit, I shall expect Andy to come to me. His sloop never smells agreeable, but at this moment it will stink most vilely of wool."

" Well, then, Mary and I will just put hats on us and come down to you, for I want a word with Andy myself. I'm not too well pleased with him about the lace."

James Nesbit made a formal salute ; he affected ceremonies of manner in his household, partly in jest, partly in a desire to be universally *point-de-vise*. Everything about him was precise and finished ; his features were fine-cut and small, his hands and feet firmly and cleanly modelled, his whole figure inclining to the under-sized, but upright and wiry ; now close upon sixty, he kept almost the step of youth. His clothes, after his invariable custom, were black, and his silver shoe-buckles and powdered wig showed in strong relief, as did the singular whiteness and transparency of his skin, that displayed blue veins on the temples and a faint pink flush in the cheeks. Nothing, except a hard downward fold at the corners of a tight-closed mouth, suggested in James Nesbit the hero of two fatal duels, and the despot of a country-side. Indeed, this air of precision which he affected was by many construed to be a lure for provocation, though it had long ceased to be anything but the hallmark of a formidable personage. Thirteen or fourteen years back, a couple of young buckeens at a big fair had seen fit to twitch the discreet black ribbons which fastened his trim breeches at the knee. Mr. Nesbit did not send a challenge. He merely mentioned his name and ordered the

gentlemen to kneel in the mud and re-tie the points. They did so, and the story ran from one end of Ireland to the other.

Young John Maxwell used frequently to speculate upon the contrast between these traits in the past and the courteous affable presence of the well-bred, well-read gentleman who was to be his father-in-law. He himself was no duellist; by the early years of George the Third the practice had somewhat fallen into disrepute, and none but the lower class of drunken squires positively valued themselves in readiness to pick a quarrel. But this rather truculent past had its full fascination for him, and he entertained the highest admiration for James Nesbit, and took keen delight in his society.

It was all part of the promotion which had fallen quite unexpectedly a few months earlier upon a young gentleman whose career as a collegian was just closed and before whom there appeared to lie only the arduous uncertainties of the Bar. Old Mr. Hayes of Castle Hayes had been little more than a name to his grand-nephew John Maxwell in Dublin; though his own county knew well the tight hands of the old recluse which held with a grim tenacity several mortgages,—and the biggest of them all upon the Douros estate. James Nesbit, cultivated gentleman that he was, had the fine taste of his generation for building, for designing avenues, walks, shrubberies, and gardens; and, naturally enough, for all these improvements needed money. Old Hayes, on the other hand, whose house was barely waterproof, whose gate-posts bent slantwise, whose carriage-drive was grass-grown, needed nothing but investments, and, like his generation, preferred investments in land. Therefore, when death suddenly smote the old hoarder, and this far away next of kin came down with

his bright face and easy-going ways to take possession of the old rat-haunted barrack and mouldy stables, that accorded so ill with a really considerable property, it was little wonder that the county, always hospitable, added something to the habitual warmth of its welcome. And though there were other pretty girls, no want of them, and other parents with a plan in their heads, there was no one either able or altogether willing to cross a design which James Nesbit did not need to declare,—a design which indeed seemed to all the country (with one inconsiderable exception) an entirely natural and suitable arrangement.

And in truth it was not only the beauty of Douros itself, nor the sweet face and soft voice of Mary Nesbit, that brought young John Maxwell many times in the month across the mountains from the Swilly side, where Castle Hayes was situated; it was also the tact, the knowledge, the bold philosophy which an incomparable mentor put at the disposal of an inexperienced youth suddenly plunged into the ownership of a large landed estate in a semi-feudal society.

From the first, Mr. Nesbit had always been able to keep the young man a willing listener, even though to listen meant absence from the side of Mary; and if at present Maxwell left the daughter for the father almost with a sense of relief, it was not wholly surprising. Mary had been delightful in the first months of their acquaintance, till there arose the question of marriage, raised with Mr. Nesbit's entire consent. Her first refusal had been followed by several weeks of absence, in which John Maxwell had (at Mr. Nesbit's suggestion) sought relief from his disappointment in a journey to Dublin. On his return, he found the girl wholly destitute of that frank charm which had so

won upon him. She was melancholy, and almost ailing, but certainly none the less pleasant to look at. Mr. Nesbit it was who hinted at the uncertainty of women's minds, the ready possibility of a girl's regretting her hasty decision ; the end had been a renewed proposal and a tearful acceptance. Since then, things had been hurried on. It was the fifteenth of June, and the preparations had only been delayed by the absence of Mr. Nesbit's elder daughter, Isabella, whose stately beauty had been winning English triumphs of which high reports came to this far region. Isabella could not reach home from London before the sixteenth and the wedding was fixed for the seventeenth.

In the period of his probation as accepted lover, John Maxwell had seen, to speak truth, very little of Mary and a great deal of Mr. Nesbit ; but there was compensation, since from Mr. Nesbit he heard a great deal of Mary's praises, and was taught to admire the beauty of her maidenly reserve. So far had the teaching wrought that to-day he had been positively elated because the girl, in answer to his importunities, had told him with a burst of tears that "She liked him much better than ever she expected to." Then she had dried her eyes, and become again almost the sunny creature whom he met at his first coming to the land of his inheritance. There was a difference, and Jack had felt it, but he found means to construe it to his own advantage. And now, when she left him and ran lightly up the steps into the house, her parting look filled him with satisfaction.

## CHAPTER II.

IN this pleasant mood of mind Jack Maxwell, obeying the impulse of the arm which his host had linked

in his, strolled quietly down the straight gravelled path that led from the steps to a rough stone pier, off which, some score yards out, a sloop lay anchored in the channel.

"I shall be glad to meet your friend Andy," he said. "He has been the shadow of a name to me long enough. Wherever I go, I hear of Andy McLoughlin, and see him—nowhere."

"It is not precisely Andy's business to be seen," remarked Mr. Nesbit gently.

Jack motioned with a laugh to the vessel. "Do you call this concealment, sir ?"

"Oh, here," replied Mr. Nesbit in a tone of indifference, "here it is another matter."

"And I take it," Jack continued, "that even if your friends, who are not simple citizens like myself, arrived upon the scene, that Andy would still be uninterrupted."

"I do not think that they would do anything to disoblige me," Mr. Nesbit replied with some significance. "But I should always endeavour to consider the tender consciences which prefer to be ignorant of details,—not to know, for example, how a butt of claret reaches their cellar."

"And your own conscience gives you no trouble, sir ?"

"Why should it, my dear Jack ? Why should not Ireland export her wool ?"

"I am entirely with you there, sir," cried Jack. "And I had sooner imitate your conduct than that of those who wink and profit. Upon my word, I think a man like your friend Andy a public benefactor, deserving of every encouragement."

A gleam of ironic amusement flitted over Mr. Nesbit's face. "I would ~~no~~ say so too loud, Jack my boy. You and I may have to hang him yet."

"That is where I cannot follow

you," retorted the young man with heat. "Here is a fellow lading your wool now, after unlading claret at your door—"

"To fill the cellars which will be drained for your wedding, my dear Jack," interrupted Mr. Nesbit. "You are virtually *particeps criminis*."

"Precisely," answered Jack, catching up the laugh in the other's tone, but abating none of his earnestness. "Andy has done me one good turn; I make no doubt that he will do me others. And that is why, if I were on a jury, I should refuse to condemn Andy."

"I trust," said Mr. Nesbit, with the same irony tempering his urbane smile, "that if I were on the same panel I might bring you to other sentiments. What we desire in a court of law is the administration of law on principles that are understood by every one. What is justice? A name. The just is merely the comprehensible. Now, if I turned and denounced my friend Andy to the revenue officers, Andy would reprobate my action, which would seem to him the height of injustice. But once Andy is caught, and brought before the grand jury at Lifford, he knows well what must happen. His business is not to be caught, and he has failed in his business. Ask himself; here he is."

As Mr. Nesbit and his companion were seen approaching the shore, a little stir had taken place on the vessel and a punt put off from her side with one man in it. He landed now on the little pier, and came up towards them, with wide staggering steps over the weed-covered stones, a tall gaunt, loose-jointed fellow in blue jersey and tarry breeks, with a crop of stubby hair and sandy whiskers under his cap. He saluted awkwardly as he approached.

"Good-day to you, Andy," said Mr.

Nesbit. "That's a fine day you have for the work."

Andy grunted discontent. "I would aye like the nicht better for thon work."

"Well, Andy, every man has his own way of working, and I say nothing against what you may do in other places. But what's done in Douros is done by my orders, and will be done the way I want it."

Andy shifted on his feet and spat. "I ken that," he grunted.

"Then if you please, let us have no more talk about it. But come now, here's a new friend for you, and maybe a customer. This is Mr. Maxwell, who is going to marry Miss Mary."

The smuggler's grim features relaxed nothing of their discontent. "I was thinking it would be," was all that he vouchsafed.

Mr. Nesbit looked sharply at him. "I presume you have been drinking his health, my friend. The whiskey of Douros is more to you, Andy, than the claret of Bordeaux. Well, I tell you Andy, you may drink his health with satisfaction, for Mr. Maxwell thinks you are a public benefactor. He wouldn't hear a word of hanging you."

Jack laughed pleasantly. "Upon my word, Andy, this is a queer introduction. It's quite true, I was saying that I see nothing wrong in what you're doing, while the law is what it is."

Andy, whose gift was not for speech, only grunted again. "Deil a hair I care, then."

Mr. Nesbit, watching him with cold eyes, interposed with a touch of amusement. "Is that all the gratitude you have for moral approbation? On my honour, Andy, you put me to shame. But you and I understand one another, I think; and Mr. Maxwell, I am sure, will come into our understanding when he has been a little

longer in the country. You know well I would hang you if you came up before a jury that had me on it."

Andy shifted before Mr. Nesbit's eyes, and again he answered as if the words were wrung out of him: "Ye would that."

There was a vicious snarl in his tone as of a half cowed dog that waits its chance for a snap; it impressed Jack most disagreeably, but Mr. Nesbit smiled as if at a tribute. "That is as it should be, then," he said. "But I have not heard your congratulations to Mr. Maxwell. Wish him luck, my friend."

A queer gleam came into the furtive eyes. "Surely then I'm wishing the best of luck to Miss Mary and the man that gets her."

"Thank you, Andy," said Jack, "and indeed he'll be a lucky man that gets her."

Again Andy shifted from one foot to the other, and twisted, as if in labour with his words. When they came they were a little unlike what the young man looked for. "Maybe he might; it's no' easy telling."

Jack broke into frank laughter; but Mr. Nesbit struck in with a touch of asperity. "Andy," he said, "you grow a philosopher. We won't detain you. The tide will be making strong in half an hour and you should be out with the next ebb. Go up to the house, and you'll meet the mistress coming down; she wants a word with you."

Andy slouched away up the path, while the two gentlemen contemplated his discontented back.

"A churlish animal," said Mr. Nesbit, "dour as they call it. For some reason he appears refractory today, but I can depend on him. He knows his place in the scheme of things, and he is attached to me at bottom. My dear John, I can explain to you the situation in a

sentence. If a man lives with a halter round his neck, and you hold the rope, he's grateful to you every day of his life that you don't pull it."

Jack flushed a little as he answered: "But if you condemn the law that puts the halter in your hand, I don't see how you can honestly draw the noose."

Mr. Nesbit raised his hand in a gesture of deprecation. "Oh, but pardon me. The code of honour is modified by circumstances. We are here in a conquered country; that is the fact never to be forgotten, and we are the garrison that hold it, for the King of England and for ourselves. If the King of England is so ill-advised as to allow a parcel of greasy manufacturers to make laws in their own interests which would in effect starve out this necessary garrison, we as individuals disobey the laws; we sell our wool where we can, in spite of them. But we are, you and I, in reality officers of the garrison, charged with administering the law, and when I take my place on the bench or on the jury, I give my sentence according to the law that I represent."

The conversation was decidedly beginning to affect the younger man's temper. He resented all the assumptions that underlay Mr. Nesbit's polished arrogance; and yet the tone was hard to take exception to, for it conveyed a subtle flattery. It was as if Jack heard humanity judged and divided, and himself, willy-nilly, marshalled in with the elect. Admiration for the man who spoke was tempered with a kind of natural repugnance. Jack was young enough for all the enthusiasms, and Mr. Nesbit's presence restrained palpably the flow of enthusiasm. Still he was naturally combative, and he struck for his view.

"I think, sir, your theory halts a little. You say you give sentence according to the law. I do not like

to be personal ; but let me suppose that a gentleman was brought before you, who had unfortunately directed a pistol bullet—”

“ My dear Jack, I wonder at you,” broke in Mr. Nesbit. “ These matters are an arrangement between gentlemen, and by common consent are excluded from the operation of the law. And yet, since it would be difficult to alter the law without appearing to sanction what is reprehensible, the law remains as it is, and we trust to the good sense of those who prevent its misapplication. Not that I encourage duelling : I never in my life provoked a man ; and I think indeed that I have done something to show that these affairs are not to be wantonly undertaken.”

Again Jack obeyed the touch which turned him from a tone perhaps, he felt, too serious to be quite well-bred. Both men laughed. “ We waive that point,” said Jack. “ I understand well that you have achieved peace. But sir, I am really at a disadvantage in this discussion ; all my instances appear to have a personal reference. And in this other instance, knowing your family as I do, it seems absurd to talk about a breach of the law. But, still, your marriage—it was not exactly an elopement, was it ? ”

Mr. Nesbit produced a neat pocket-knife and spent a moment in paring his beautiful nails, before he answered : “ I should be sorry indeed if my example was ever cited to justify scoundrelly violence. You must allow for the case, Jack. Mrs. Nesbit is the best of women, but the one fault in her nature (if indeed it be a fault) is indecision. I was passionately attached to her ; I was certain that her happiness lay in her marriage with me, and I made my offer gently. But, my dear Jack, I was less fortunate than you. My youth had been a little irregular : it was open to mis-

construction, and it was misrepresented both to her and to her parents ; and therefore I did the one thing that lay open to me. I took the decision into my own hands, and, technically speaking, I suppose you would call it an abduction.”

Jack was filled with admiration for the tact and temper with which his home-thrust had been met. “ I am sure,” he said warmly, “ that Mrs. Nesbit has been grateful to you. But still I hold to my point, that the law is one thing for men like you, and another for men like Andy. Had it come to a trial, you would not have feared conviction.”

Again Mr. Nesbit answered, with his air of discreet amusement. “ As to that, I hope I should have been fortunate in the judgment of my judges ; but happily we settled everything amicably. In other cases, my dear Jack, I have made a sharp distinction. I was on the jury that hung McGlashan.”

“ You could scarcely have done otherwise,” retorted Jack sharply. “ The man was a madman and a murderer ; he disgraced the country.”

“ Exactly, my dear Jack. If he had carried off the girl, and made good the marriage, we might have used leniency ; but, sir, he fired a blunderbuss into the carriage,—a most undiscriminating weapon. It was a bloody courtship to seek to kill the father by the side of his own daughter, and unreasonable, for it was the daughter he killed. But,” and his tone took a new trenchancy, “ the plain truth, my dear Jack, is that the fellow was no gentleman. If a gentleman takes the law into his own hands, he uses a certain moderation. McGlashan was a Presbyterian, and a Presbyterian is only one or two degrees better than a Catholic, and should not be encouraged to ape the indiscretions of his betters.”

"And a Catholic is beyond the pale altogether, I suppose," Jack commented, all the liberalism of his nature again rising in revolt.

"A short shrift and a long rope," answered his companion "are the most I would give to lawbreakers among them. Let them live orderly, and I am all for toleration; but let them always feel where the power lies."

Jack flushed. "On this matter, sir, I never can understand your sentiments. Surely the Catholic gentry of this country take rank with the best."

"By our toleration, yes. There are certain men of old family and established position who have not recanted the errors of their Church. They are gentlemen,—on sufferance. It is a kind of gentility for which I should have little liking, and the men who enjoy it can never be content. I would add none to such a class. I can understand your sentiments, but we must look at this matter like statesmen and rulers. If we count by birth, Catholics, I doubt not, can tell their pedigrees with the best of us; but where I am master," and his voice grew hard and emphatic, "there shall be none of your half gentry, men with the pride of blood and education, whom we debar from the natural prerogative of blood and breeding. These are the enemy. The common sort can be readily kept under. Look," he said, pointing across the bay to a spit of land, on whose extremity the tower and battlements of an old castle loomed square and solid; "you know the story of that place?"

"I have heard something," said Jack.

"Well, it is instructive. When I came to reside here, there was one Sweeney living over yonder, in a little house near the old castle, and he claimed to be the head of the

MacSwine clan. Do you suppose that man forgot that his grandfather's grandfather was the master in this country and held that castle? I took order with Mr. Sweeney, I promise you. And still, I might have let him stay to the end where he was, for a decent, quiet, companionable man I found him, and many a bottle he drank at my table. But there was a young whipper-snapper of a son growing up that came home from France with a head full of fine notions, and a bow, if you please, that the Jesuits had taught him. And so we parted. Poor Sweeney, I made the change easy for him, and I think he bore me no malice, but I believe he never thrrove in France. He missed his native whiskey. But the son, as I foresaw, is grown up into a traitorous scoundrel, and has joined the parcel of riff-raff that they call the Irish Brigade. If he ever sets foot on my land—ah, here come the ladies."

Jack was not sorry to see them. There had been many such discussions before, but never before had Mr. Nesbit put his creed so incisively; and the story of the old decayed chieftain, given his choice between exile and all the engines of annoyance which a Protestant could bring to bear on a Catholic neighbour, was indeed not new to him, yet he had never before heard it from the lips of the chief actor. He had heard it in many places, and he had often questioned Mary about old Mr. Sweeney and the proud young lad whose pride occasioned the quarrel; for Mary had many friends among the country people, and spoke to them in their own tongue, and she surely must have heard many tales of this disinherited chieftain. But on this subject Mary had been curiously reticent, and her future husband, thinking of that reticence,

was more than ever convinced that it arose from a tacit disapproval of her father's action. Jack was glad to think now that he could count upon finding in her mind an echo of the feeling which Mr. Nesbit had roused in him.

Tacit the disapproval was bound to be, he well knew, for no one questioned James Nesbit's decisions in his own house. But what Jack did not understand was that folk under Nesbit's roof and rule developed a faculty of reticence; that the open-faced girl who was coming down the gravel path had learnt to keep her own counsel almost as well as the peasantry about her; in a word, that, like each and all of them, she had been trained into the makings of a conspirator.

And a prettier conspirator it would have been hard enough to discover. Her mother, who walked beside her, leaning a little on the girl's arm that was round her waist, had been a beauty,—was a beauty still for that matter, her soft complexion blooming in that air, where neither frost nor east wind has power, like a rose of late autumn. Yet the lines of her face, for all their delicacy, had somewhat relaxed, and relaxed they drooped. Her life was of the most unruffled; no wrinkles spoke of thought taken for any morrow; she had been throughout long years shielded and sheltered and surrounded with every courtesy by a husband whose will she never thought to question. And yet, for all that, in her gentle eyes there lurked an indefinable something, as if it were the shadow of a fear.

You might look long into Mary Nesbit's face before you saw fear written there. Her little round hat, of some pliant Leghorn straw, perched daintily on the top of her head with a big blue ribbon flutter-

ing from off it,—her light cape of pearl grey hooked close at the neck and falling loose from her shoulder,—her gown of flowered muslin flounced out after the fashion of the day,—all these accentuated the graceful, the feminine. But under them all her figure showed strong and springy, and answered to the suggestion of activity in her countenance. Yet the features were oddly stamped; the lines of her face were her father's, the eyes and mouth her mother's; the eyes a little more boldly opened, the mouth more firmly closed, and both indicating a humour which Mrs. Nesbit never possessed. But, firm as they were, they were soft even in their resolution. It was the face of a girl who would front danger willingly, but be slow to give pain, who would ride with you laughing into the shadow of death, but might find it bitterly hard to say *no*. And so pretty a face was it, with its union of firmness and softness, the strong line from cheek to chin mitigated by the dove-like eyes; with its bright flush of red through the clear white that goes with the darkest brown hair, with its bright lips a little slow over soft syllables;—so pretty a face was it, that undoubtedly those lips would more than once need to shape themselves to a refusal.

They were set to it on the instant. For Jack Maxwell, his face lighting up at the girl's coming in a glow that brought a gentle answer of itself to her mother's eyes, and maybe touched the daughter not a little, was quick with his request. "The tide has turned, Mrs. Nesbit," he said, "and I want to cross the bay. I must be going at once. Mary, will you not walk up with me as far as the point?"

Mary made excuses: her mother needed her, there were a thousand things to be done; but Mrs. Nesbit was soft-hearted at the moment to

the young man. "Never mind about them, Mary," she said. "Go with him. It's the last you'll see of him as a bachelor." And so, pleasantly enough but by no means eagerly, Mary consented. And in a moment Jack Maxwell was off quick-footed across the lawn to the stables for his horse.

### CHAPTER III.

THE whole north coast of Ulster, from the Giants' Causeway to the Bloody Foreland, is ragged as the tail of a beggar's coat, cut and carved this way and that with rents between mountain and mountain up which sea-water finds a free way. Most of these loughs enter by a narrow and spread inwards, making a basin which drainage from the shores fills with a silt of mud; and the character of the foreshore and tideway is in consequence. But it is not so with Douros Water. Broad at its mouth to the Atlantic, and lying among shores almost barren of cultivation, it is bright and spotless at low tide as at flood. The feature of Douros is its sand; sand pure almost as driven snow, yet tinged by some chance with a warmer colour than is common, showing on a June day of sunshine,—such as this was when the Nesbits looked across it as they waited—almost orange against the azure. White it was on the far shore, up against the low-ridged line of sand-hills; but in the wide expanse left bare by the tide, it glowed golden, shading to a rosy pink where the water lipped it. Everywhere else round the water line of Douros, there was either this spotless sand, or black rock, blue in patches with mussel growth. But under the wooded shores of the demesne, the water, even at low tide, came close up on a beach of shingle covered with tufted sea-

weed, pulpy and amber-coloured. The landscape spread in belts, colour laid against colour; golden green of the fringing oak woods, golden amber of the seaweed; then a zone of radiant azure and, beyond that, golden orange of the sand running back to the strand's long white curve, the grey and silver of bent-covered sandhills, and, behind them all, the purple of Slieve Alt, down which the road ran from the outer world.

Such was Douros as you saw it at a glance; but to understand it, you needed to look, say, from where McLoughlin's sloop lay moored in the channel. Two rivers were at work all the days and nights in the year, scouring that channel, and they had their meeting a few hundred yards to the right of the pier, where the Douros shore pushed itself out to a rocky point. One river, the Owenbuie, flowed in from the breast of a great mountain that filled the whole base of the bay; the other, the Lanan, came from the Slieve Alt range, by a tortuous course, so that the outfall of the two was almost parallel, kept apart by a solid tongue of land opposite the Douros point. And on the extremity of this tongue, its walls lapped by the Lanan, stood the castle of the MacSwineys. It had been the home of Owen Oge of the Battle Axes, the foster home of Red Hugh O'Donnell; it had been captured from Owen Oge, not by the sword but by process of law, when after Carew's pacification of Ulster, the work of confiscation began, business-like and methodical. Rory O'Donnell and Hugh O'Neill took ship for Spain from the Swilly on a day in 1608, and Owen Oge McSwibhne of the Battle Axes, who had made his peace with the Government, was given to know that for their treasonable practices the lands of the Earls of Tyrconnell and Tyrone stood forfeit, that his lands were the lands of his overlord,

and therefore that the castle and the rest of his heritage passed to the Crown. A hundred and fifty years had gone by since that edict issued, and the castle was now a picturesque appanage to the demesne of Mr. Nesbit, heir of the confiscation.

Between the old and the new intervened barely a mile of water; but to reach Castle Carrig from Douros House by land, you must skirt the whole inward sweep of the bay, which formed an estuary to the little Owenbuie river that tumbled from the great gable end of Slievemor. The estuary of the Lanan, the larger river, which fell in on the other side of Castle Carrig, was shorter and less imposing. Half a mile above the castle, whose walls were lapped by the water, the tide-way contracted till it could be spanned by the hog-backed bridge over which the Slieve Alt road ran. From this Lanan bridge it was a full two hours' drive for the Nesbits' heavy coach to their hall door; but with a falling tide Mr. Nesbit's boatman could bring his guests back by water from a day's salmon-fishing in less time than you would walk an Irish mile.

The tide was running up now, though still dead low, when Jack Maxwell came from the house down the path, his big bay trampling the gravel. As he swung himself off and stood beside the others, Mrs. Nesbit exhorted him: "Don't stay too long talking now, Jack. It isn't safe to be crossing from the point without you see well where you're going, and the tide creeps up fast."

But Jack only laughed. "Rory knows the sands by this as well as any flounder in the bay, Mrs. Nesbit. I'm not afraid of the quicks they talk about. Still, we may be moving."

"Well then, Jack," said Mr. Nesbit, "I suppose we shall see you on Tuesday. But mind you, Alec Hamil-

ton will want you to make a night of it with him on Monday, the last of your bachelor evenings. If you don't watch, he'll have you in such a state that you won't be able to set one foot before the other."

"I'll take care of myself and him too, sir," said Jack. Then, as he went up to Mrs. Nesbit to say goodbye, she put her pretty white hands on his shoulders, drew him to her, and kissed him. There were tears in her eyes and Jack grew red at the unlooked for demonstration. Then he stooped over her hand and put his lips to it.

"Come, come, Mrs. Nesbit," said her husband, "we haven't come to the time for kissing and crying yet. Don't keep the boy standing. Away with you, Jack, and safe home." And so Jack, leading Rory, started along the shore path with Mary walking beside him on his left. They walked in silence for a little; constraint and shyness were on them. Then Jack stretched out his free hand, and caught the girl's.

"Take my arm, Mary dear," he said. "I want to talk to you, and I cannot when you are all that long way off."

The girl let her fingers rest lightly on his sleeve, and he pressed them close to his side. "There, that is better. Mary dear, I did not think your mother had so much kindness for me."

The hand answered with a gentle pressure on his arm. "Surely, Jack, you have always been a great favourite with her."

"Then she does not grudge you to me?" he asked.

Mary's eyes darkened and swelled. "I am afraid she would begrudge me to anyone, Jack," was the answer.

The young man drew the girl's hand into his. "Your poor mother! Mary, I should be wretched if I

thought she was unhappy for your going. But still, it is not as if you were leaving the country. Why, we shall be backward and forward continually."

The hand in his made a faint response to his clasp. "You have a kind heart, Jack," the girl said, and her voice was soft.

He laughed joyfully. "Kind, Mary! You give me too much credit. It is a wise selfishness. Why, is it not the hope of my life to make you happier than any woman ever was, and how could you be happy when your mother was crying her eyes out, yes, or even lonely and sorrowful? I know you too well for that, my dear."

Mary made no answer but tears began to flow, and Jack, seeing them, loosed her hand and made to put his arm round her; but she drew away from him. "No, no, please, no," she said; and as he caught her hand and persisted, her face changed, and she began to defend herself with an assumption of gaiety. "No, no, I say. Come, sir, you presume. While I have my freedom, let me make the most of it."

The young man was sorely dashed. "As you will," he said, a little petulantly.

His sudden dejection touched Mary. "There, Jack, don't be vexed with me. I will take your arm and we will be good friends, if you will let me."

"Friends!" said he and there was reproach in his tone. Mary coloured and dropped her eyes. "Friends?" he went on passionately. "Here am I, worshipping the ground you tread on,—yes, this very walk here under the sycamores, I have come back here by myself after you have been along it with me, and I have been ready to kiss the prints of your shoes in the sand. And you talk to

me of being friends,—me that you are going to marry before the sun has set three times."

"Oh Jack, Jack," the girl cried, "don't be unreasonable. It was not that I meant. I only meant, let us be as we are till — the day after to-morrow." Then with a sudden change, to get away from his tragic tone, she went on: "And if you stand here quarrelling, the tide will be up and you will have to ride all round by Slievemor. There! I am going to take your arm whether you like it or no."

They moved on again from under the shade of the big sycamores along the path that was screened on one side with thick rhododendron bushes, while on the other a narrow belt of hazel and scrub oak dipped over the shingle and the water. Discontent was still written large on the young man's face.

"Mary," he said at last, "words are cold comfort for a man. But if you will not let me kiss you, will you not give me a word to remember and be happy with?"

She looked up at him, half pathetically, half-jesting, "But, Jack, you forget I am only a country girl. I have no fine phrases; and I cannot tell you that I ever wanted to kiss your footprints, or Rory's either, for it would not be true."

"It is no fine phrases I want of you," her lover answered quickly, catching her hand. "Mary, I love you, I adore you, I worship you; and never once have you said to me one little word that I want. Mary, will you say to me now, *I love you?*"

The girl's face clouded, and a great seriousness came into her eyes. "So that is a little word!" she said slowly. "Love is a big word, Jack, I think." Then, as if with a touch of anger, she put seriousness from her and again resumed her tone of jest: "I have

said I will marry you. Sure, that is enough for any man."

Jack Maxwell's face flushed quickly. Stopping in his walk, he turned full on her. "I believe you are only marrying me to please your mother."

She flushed too, but met his eyes full. "You have no right to say that." He could see thoughts pass through her eyes; then her set countenance broke, the tears came, and she put both hands on his arm. "Yes, you have! Forgive me, Jack, and listen. Every girl dreams dreams, does she not?"

"Ah, Mary," he answered, "and every man. But you were the dream I dreamed."

"Pray heaven, no," she answered with swift and bitter emphasis. "It is a sore thing waking out of dreams. Marriage is not a dream; and Jack, I hate to say more than I mean, but I will say this to you: I think I shall be very fond of my husband."

He pressed the girl's hand passionately to his lips, and she laughed at him through her tears. "There, will that content you? Come now, or you will never get across."

Two or three minutes' more of walking brought them out beyond the point where the bay doubled inward and ran up in a broad stretch to the base of Slievemor. Twenty yards out from the Douros shore was the channel of the Owenbuie, a hundred yards wide by now, and to all appearance impassable; beyond that lay the long stretch of wet sand, at the sight of which Jack exclaimed: "There was no such need for hurry."

"No indeed," Mary answered; "it will be an hour yet before I can get up to Carrig in the boat."

"To Carrig?" he said. "What takes you to the castle?"

The girl coloured and looked confused, evidently repenting her words; but she went on to explain. "Only

to see old Bride Gallagher. I promised I would go to her to-day or to-morrow, before—" and she paused.

"Before I carried you off," Jack ended the sentence. "But, Mary dear, what do you want with waiting for the boat? Here am I, and here's Rory; what ails you to ride pillion that little way?"

To his surprise the girl refused curtly with a sudden look of obduracy. Jack pleaded. Why not? Old Gallagher could bring her back in his curragh when the tide rose. And it was the least she could do, he said. They had been quarrelling or almost quarrelling; she would not wish him to be unhappy.

Awkwardly the girl returned to her excuse of errands to be done in the house; but he was quick with his rejoinder. "Things to do! and you going up to Carrig in a boat as soon as the tide makes a little." Then, with growing anger, "No, Mary," he cried, "let us have the truth of it. Sooner than sit on my horse with your arms about me for five minutes, you will go to shifts and excuses. What else am I to believe when I go from you to-day?" He stood there, gazing at her, with real pain evident in his lover-like petulance. "Can you give me a good reason?" he went on. "If you can, I will go away content."

But Mary knew in her heart that the good reason could not be given. "Indeed, Jack, I don't want you to go away unhappy," she cried, with tears rising to her eyes. "I think you are very foolish and I had rather wait. But if my refusing hurts you, I will go with you now."

Instantly he swung into the saddle and stretched down his hand to the girl. Light as a bird she set her foot on his and sprang to her perch behind him. The big bay stepped down across the sand, and solemnly

into the blue water, taking a slant across the channel, and in a minute Mary was gathering up her skirts to keep them clear. Another minute, and Rory was travelling only fetlock-deep; another, and he was on the moist sand, and heading for the clump of trees that grow on the shore about Carrig Castle.

#### CHAPTER IV.

In that clump of trees, screened by bushes, were two other people, a man and a woman, watching the whole of this pretty transit. The woman was an oldish peasant in the plaid shawl, dark bodice, and blue petticoat common to the country, barefooted too, like all her equals. But the man was of another class. It was clear at the first glance that he was no peasant, but evidently a gentleman and an officer; tall and dark, with an indefinable touch of the foreigner about him; and the uniform that he wore, though it was of the British scarlet, belonged to no British regiment.

They had been sitting since an hour before low tide, and when Jack Maxwell and his bay came into view on the far shore, an exclamation broke from both of them.

"Yonder he is. Did I not tell you?" said the old woman in Irish.

"Aye," the officer answered between his teeth; "but you did not tell me she would be with him, that she would go with him to the last edge of the land before she would part with him."

"Wait and see, wait and see. 'Tis I have the good knowledge of Miss Mary. Who could tell but her father sent her for fear the young omadhaun might take a notion that not for love of him Miss Mary was marrying? But sure every other creature in the country knows her father forced her into it by reason of the big mortgage,

and him without a penny to meet it. Ay, there he is mounting now. Sure you'll see him well in a minute."

A fierce cry broke from the soldier. He saw Maxwell stretch his hand to Mary and draw her into the saddle. "My soul to the devil!" he said fiercely. "Is this what you brought me to see? Does he wear a sword on him, Bride? for may the sun never shine on me if I do not stop him before her face. Woman, what madness is on you?" he continued, suddenly changing his tone, for his companion was clapping her hands in glee, till he caught her savagely by the arm, and she stopped to answer.

"Is it him wear a sword? Sure, what would the like of him do with it? But don't be talking of stopping him. Isn't she the pearl of the world for cleverness? She to make him bring her across the water, when maybe old Nesbit has the boat locked away from her. Well now, if that doesn't beat all!"

"Ah, be still you old fool," the man broke in. "Why should James Nesbit try to keep her? What thought has he that I am here, that I would dare to be here? Ay, and what knowledge has she of any call to bring her here?"

"Faith, not a one of me knows. But I know right well that Miss Mary said she would come to me this day or the morrow; for, says she to me, 'Bride, if it was on the eve of my wedding-day I got word from him, they should never bring me to the altar with another man.'"

"'Tis likely she changed her mind since then," he muttered, "or I would not see her now with her arms round her lover."

"Her lover!" said the old woman scornfully. "Musha, love of my heart, have you eyes? Is that the way a girl sits that rides behind her lover? Ay, she may talk and she may laugh, but

you do not see her press her cheek against his shoulder ; no, it might be old George the butler that sits before her. Hold still now, for they're at the shore ; and if he kisses her at parting, 'tis he has the right to do it this day. Och, will you look at that ? Down she leps herself ; she gives him the tip of her finger ; aye, and she won't let him dismount ; and here she comes running, and never a look over her shoulder at him. Away with you now, and do the way I bid you ; and James Nesbit—a red stone be in the throat of him !—will be beat yet. Ay, mind you, the big mortgage will be heavy on him till he dies, and the anger and spite to the back of it."

The young man slipped away from her as she spoke, and up through the narrow track in the bushes. The woman followed him more leisurely, still muttering curses to herself. Then, emerging on the cart-track that led from the shore to the entrance in the castle-wall, she came to meet Mary who sped swift-footed along the way.

"Och, God and Mary with you, darlin'," she said, "prosperity and long life to you this happy day ! Come in now to the house, for it's the last day I'll be seeing you here, I'm thinking. Wasn't that the grand ferryman ye had this evening ?"

They had passed through the postern gate in the wall, and were now entering a low large kitchen, giving on to the courtyard. It was the only apartment tenanted by Ned Gallagher and his wife, who lived as caretakers in the old building. Mary reddened as she took her seat on the wooden chair which the old woman dusted for her and set by the fire.

"Did you see me, then, Bride ?"

"Surely, I did, then, and me just out gathering a wheen sticks ; and thinks I to myself, it was the kind thought of Miss Mary to come and see me,

a day when she has that many things to attend to ; but maybe and all, it's the good way she has of coming that tempts her, and she won't think bad of lossing time on me, with a fine young man holding close to her all the way. An' a fine young man he is, then, and a lovely couple ye'll make, and if ye came to old Bride for good wishes, sure it's yourself knows ye have them."

Mary looked at her angrily, with the firm lines of her face set, and wrath in her blue eyes.

"Is it yourself that is mocking at me, Bride ?" said she, speaking in the Irish. "Tis you that have the knowledge what I am doing, and the reason I am doing it. And 'tis well you know gladness is far from me this day. And I sent word to you that I would come, but it was not for lying words I would be coming."

"God with us, then, Miss Mary !" cried the old woman, as she moved restlessly about the room, peering toward the darkness where a door opened from the kitchen into a sleeping chamber. "What lie would there have been in it, me to be wishing you well ? Sure and all, seeing you and him that great with one another, I thought it was all for good. But pity on us, if the one that is away had seen you, 'tis the sharp thorn would be in the heart of him."

"Tis much that he would care, then," Mary answered bitterly. "The one that stays may remember, but the one that is away forgets. I think shame of myself that I am here now on the eve of my marriage asking for tidings of a man that has forgotten me. I think shame of myself that I wrote to him, but I promised that till the last hour I would try and have word of him. Bride, what is come on you to-day ? It is the strange way you have of laughing when I speak to you in sorrow.

Answer me, Bride ; is there any word for me ?

Mary turned as she spoke from facing the fire to where the old woman was seemingly at work dusting a cup she had taken down from the dresser, and she saw strange motions. "What are you doing, Bride ?" she asked. "Who are you signing at ?"

"Och, wisha, darling, I was just whishing the hens out ; they do be for ever running in on me."

"Come here, then, and answer me. I know there is something you are hiding from me."

Bride came and knelt down beside the girl and took her hands. "They were saying, Miss, that Andy McLoughlin saw Captain Hugh in France."

Mary's lips tightened, and she gazed hard into the fire. "He did !" Then, after a pause while Bride clasped and fondled her hands, she went on : "And he has no letter for me ?"

"Not a letter at all, alanna," was the answer.

Mary drew her hands away and put them to her face. Then she stood up. "Tell Neddy to get the oars into the curragh, Bride," she said. "I will be going home. Ah !"

The cry broke from her as Hugh McSwiney stepped out of the dark doorway and stood before her holding out his hands. Then, as she stood and swayed, he drew nearer and she was in his arms, his kisses were warm on her lips, her face, her neck, and the soft Gaelic words were close in her ears : "My treasure, my sweet, pulse of my heart, my love, my sorrow !"

But with a sudden motion she pushed him from her. "Hugh," she said, "how did you come here ? Why did you not write ?"

Swift words told his story. The brigade had been fighting in Italy ; her letter had been long in reaching him ; then the posts were slow, and

the passage first in one smuggler's vessel, then in another : "Till last of all I came with the wine for your wedding, dear love, and a black mind in me that doubted you."

"But now, Hugh, are you safe," she said anxiously, "and in that uniform ?"

"Safe !" broke in Bride Gallagher. "Is it the McSwiney not safe, and him in the castle of his fathers ? The country-side will die before they lay a hand on you."

The young soldier laughed fiercely. "God's truth, Bride, it is the last place where the McSwiney can find safety these times. 'Tis not the day of Red Hugh and Owen Oge. But, Mary, there is none in the country-side that will betray me, and it is not for long I am meaning to stay. But," and he looked hard at her, "now when I am come, I am fearing I would be better away. It is a hard choice for you, asthore ; riches here, and poverty there ; the lot of a soldier's wife, and in a strange country."

Her only answer was to draw him to her from where he stood at arm's length. Then, looking up into his face, she questioned him. "But, Hugh, need it be a strange country ? They say this war is ending, and then—"

His face blackened. "Now or then, it is all one. We are outlaws in the brigade ; and if they gave us leave to return, would I live, do you think, in this country where I must ask leave of the law before I can wear a sword at my side ? Do you see me going to your father for license ? No, Mary, it's the one choice—with me, exile and the hopes of an adventurer ; here, all you can desire."

Again she put her arms round him. "I have only the one word, agra." Then a sudden thought stung her, and she started away from him. "Ah,

but that is not true. And what have I done to-day? When I think how I came here, Hugh, Hugh, I am sick with shame! Will he ever believe I did not know? Oh, if I had only known! Did you see me cross the water, too?" The young man nodded his head and an angry look came into his eyes. "Oh!" she cried, and the red flooded her face. "No, no," she cried, as he made to take her in his arms again, "no, no, not now! I hate myself!" Then she turned sharply on Bride. "Why was I not told? Why was I treated like a child? Were you afraid I could not be trusted?"

The old woman shrank away from her anger, but Hugh McSwiney set his teeth hard. "If you repent," he said, "if you have so much consideration for this gentleman, there is time still. If I do not blame you for what you were ready to do, why

need you be so much afraid of his opinion?"

Mary looked at him reproachfully. "Hugh, Hugh, can you not understand that a woman may be afraid of shame who does not fear poverty? And it is before him I am ashamed, for it is to him I have broken my word. And this day there was the foolishness of despair on me, and I did what must seem to him deliberate treachery. Hugh dear, he is young and he is honourable, and he thinks honourably of me and all women. And I shall be the first woman who deceives him."

"Well," said Hugh McSwiney, striking his hand impatiently upon his sword, "if he thinks he has a grievance against you, I shall find means to offer him full satisfaction for it. That is enough talk of him, Mary. We have to settle what must be done, and in haste."

*(To be continued.)*

## MONSIEUR DE BLOWITZ.

DURING the last fifty years journalism has been revising its ideals, and shifting its ambitions. Once a willing servant, it is to-day a busy master. No longer content to repeat the passage of events, it would turn them to its own end, and persuade a docile public to believe that all things happened for its peculiar glory and benefit. "An eye in every house, an ear at every keyhole,"—such was the modest aspiration of one arrogant journalist, who had not dared to breathe it without the conspicuous example of M. de Blowitz. But M. de Blowitz would have made a discreet qualification; he would have insisted that the house, upon which he turned his eye, was a diplomatist's, and that behind the keyhole to which he applied his ear, they were whispering secrets of State; for the late correspondent of *THE TIMES* in Paris believed that the Providence, whose ends were shaped by journalism, was a respectable Providence, and while he did more than any of his contemporaries to increase the importance of his craft, he did not pry into musty corners, nor prefer the tavern to the palace.

De Blowitz (like a peer of the realm he disdained Christian names) was born in Bohemia some eighty years ago. His early life, and even his nationality are enwrapped in mystery. Though he was expansive enough concerning the achievements of his maturer years, he was curiously reticent about his youth, and as death overtook him in the act of composing his *Memoirs*, the curtain of uncertainty will never be drawn

aside. His name was Oppert, as he was forced to confess when he took out his papers of naturalisation as a French citizen, and Oppert he was always called by angry French journalists who wished to rob him of his dignity. But there is little in a name, and as Blowitz he will always be remembered—till he is forgotten.

Of his early life no more can be said than that the true spirit of adventure soon drove him from his father's house, and that for some years he wandered up and down Europe, picking up languages, and studying politics, to which he had given his mind, as he told Lord Beaconsfield, ever since he was born. His industry was not thrown away, and he was no more than nineteen when a French Minister of Public Instruction gave him a post as teacher of foreign tongues at Tours. It was not a bad beginning, but the soul of Blowitz could not for ever be chained to an usher's stool. Nevertheless he served a long apprenticeship at Tours, at Poitiers, and at Marseilles, and it was not until his marriage, in 1859, that he ceased to perform the duties of a pedagogue. For a while he vainly fumbled for his vocation, and it was not until 1869 that the first real chance of his life came, in which year MM. Thiers, Gambetta, and de Lesseps stood as candidates before the electors of Marseilles. Now, at that moment an official representative would have hardly polled a vote, and M. de Lesseps, though nominated by the Emperor, was careful to disavow his august patronage. But Blowitz had a friend in Egypt, who told him in

a letter how a messenger had come out with an order from the Emperor to M. de Lesseps that he should be a candidate for Marseilles. Blowitz, of course, gave the secret to a Legitimist politician, who printed it in his journal, and all the hopes of M. de Lesseps foundered in the storm which followed. Blowitz was terrified at what he had done. "I was somewhat in the position of an elephant," he wrote in HARPER'S MAGAZINE, "from whose back a cannon has been discharged, and which first feels the shock without knowing whence it comes." But Marseilles very soon found out whence it came, and clamoured loudly for the expulsion of the elephant. Indeed, Blowitz would have had but a small chance of survival had he not won the favour of Thiers, who, when the order of expulsion was signed, quietly put it aside. In the career of most men this would have been a mere episode; for Blowitz it shaped the whole future. In the first place, it had won him the notice of Thiers, at that time invaluable; in the second, it had proved to him the deadly power of "exclusive information." Henceforth that was the end of his constant ambition, the deity of his daily worship. Exclusive information! That little stone in the hand of David was strong enough to destroy all the Goliaths of the world, as Blowitz presently proved to the discomfiture of Bismarck and many another.

For the next two years the great little man found small chance of distinction. He was forced by the hostile opinion of Marseilles to hide himself in the country; nor did he increase his popularity by prophesying that disaster would surely overtake the arms of France. Yet he proved that his prophecy was based rather upon a love of truth than upon malice, by becoming a Frenchman at the

moment of defeat. *Il s'est fait naturaliser vaincu*, said About with undeniable wit, and surely Blowitz never took a more prudent step than when he made himself the citizen of a conquered country. By this simple act he not merely regained his lost popularity; he gave touching evidence of his loyalty to France, and Thiers and his colleagues were not the men to let so graceful a thought go unrewarded. No sooner was the war over than he was marked out for promotion. Thiers suggested a consulship, and had not Providence intervened he might have passed a useful, inglorious life as the protector of French interests at Riga.

But Providence did intervene, as Blowitz most devoutly believed it always intervened, in his favour. There is nothing more difficult than to discover the truth of modern history, and it has been variously told how Blowitz was appointed upon the staff of THE TIMES. His own account is briefly this: he had already made the acquaintance of Laurence Oliphant, when Hardmann, Oliphant's colleague at Versailles, was called away to England. Oliphant asked Blowitz to discharge Hardmann's duties for a fortnight. Blowitz was overjoyed, conscious that the one chance of his life had come, and determined not to miss it. Yet for a moment he hesitated. Oliphant surmised that the remuneration was insufficient. "No," said Blowitz, "it is no question of money. I can assure you it is something much more embarrassing. Before beginning, I should like to know something more about the paper. I should like to see a number of THE TIMES." Blowitz had never seen a number of THE TIMES! To us, for whom Blowitz has been for many years inseparable from THE TIMES, the story seems incredible. But it is perfectly true, and is only a single

instance, one among many, of Blowitz's astounding ingenuousness.

For a while he discharged his duties with triumphant success. In his first telegram, to read which in *LA LIBERTÉ* was "one of the strongest emotions he ever experienced in his life," he publicly repeated what Thiers had told him in private. He visited the statesman the next day with apprehension, and if he expected to find his friend indifferent, he was disappointed. "Tell me," said Thiers, "how it comes about that *THE TIMES* was able to publish a conversation which I have had with no one but you." Blowitz, with his customary frankness, confessed at once, and Thiers seems to have seen a profit in such transactions, for he never withdrew his confidence from the man, who printed all he knew. However, Blowitz's triumph was interrupted by Hardmann's return, and again he was forced to turn his eyes to frost-bound Riga. But presently Oliphant himself left Paris for America, and then it was that Blowitz was appointed assistant to Hardmann, whom in two years he succeeded. Such is Blowitz's own account of the circumstances which led to his appointment to *THE TIMES*. It is but fair to say that Laurence Oliphant had another and curiously different tale to tell, and used to tell it with infinite gusto.

Once in the saddle, Blowitz set no bounds to the course which he would run. He aspired to govern Europe through *THE TIMES*. He knew, none better, how much may be accomplished by the sudden throwing of a bombshell of news into the columns of a journal, and he took care to be liberally supplied with bombs. He possessed in full measure the tact and spirit which make a Parisian; the *salons* welcomed him as eagerly as the boulevards. He went everywhere,

and everywhere he went he picked up gossip, nor did he ever reveal the source of his information to the outside world. Those who told him secrets knew that their names would never be revealed, and the least discreet of diplomatists made use of Blowitz with the utmost confidence. But while in one sense he was Parisian, in another sense Parisian he never was. His foreign blood and his English journal saved him from those accesses of political madness which were apt to excite his colleagues, and he was able to keep a cool head in the presence of the many *affaires* which have disturbed Paris during the last thirty years. His influence, then, is easily intelligible; he got authentic information, and he sifted it with sound judgment. His prophecies were so often fulfilled that he seemed infallible, and he very soon became an object of envy to all the journalists of Paris, French and English alike. His first great *coup* was made in 1875, when he sent a letter to *THE TIMES*, entitled "A French Scare," in which the warlike projects of Germany were exposed, and which, it was believed, saved France from a second invasion. But the great achievement of his life was the premature publication of the Berlin Treaty. When the last words of this document were telegraphed from Brussels, he felt as Wellington must have felt after Waterloo. He had fought the greatest battle of his life, and won it; and it is not surprising that he never tired of fighting it over again in converse with his friends, or in the pages of a sympathetic magazine.

When he left Paris for Berlin, he had but a small hope of success. The Prussians had no love for him. Bismarck had gone so far as to insult him publicly in the Reichstag. Moreover, when he reached the Prussian

capital, he found all the world resolved upon silence. "At Paris the fish talk," said he in his pleasant way; "at Berlin the parrots are dumb." But Blowitz was not without a plan. He had already got a young foreigner, a friend of his, appointed secretary to the representative of one of the Powers; and the young foreigner was pledged to reveal to him the secret proceedings of the Congress. It is not a pretty story; yet none can deny that Blowitz's exhortation to his young friend is a masterpiece of sophistry. "I do not ask you to divulge the smallest secret to me," said he, "or to commit the slightest indiscretion. You will simply keep me summarily informed of the things done. It will be for me to supplement your hints. You will never speak to me about things about to be done, for I will not give you a derogatory task." In these distinctions there is a nobility which the common man cannot understand. To seek a confidential post in order to betray official secrets—that, we gather, is not derogatory; it is derogatory to reveal what is about to be done; and surely it must take a peculiarly special correspondent to appreciate the difference. However, the young man's task, though not derogatory, was delicate. If the two accomplices were seen to converse, the game was up. But Blowitz never despaired. He stayed at the Kaiserhof; the young man dined there; and every day he put what secrets he had to betray in the lining of his hat; when he had dined he went off taking Blowitz's hat with him, and leaving his own in exchange. A dignified artifice, truly, and very well it succeeded, until the young man grew careless, fell under a just suspicion, and was summarily dismissed.

Again Blowitz was at his wits' end. The young man, whom he believed to

have been marked out by a Supreme Power to assist him, was driven from Berlin. To whom should he turn? He was moping disconsolately in his hotel, when suddenly another instrument presented itself. This time it was a diplomatist, who whispered in his ear, "Walk out to-morrow between one and two in the Wilhelmstrasse, and I will see you." The next day the diplomatist met him and gave him the promise which made his heart palpitate with delight; "Come for the treaty the day before the closing," said this amiable plenipotentiary, "and you shall have it." The rest may be briefly told. On the day appointed the treaty was placed in Blowitz's hands. The French Ambassador gave him a sight of the preamble, and he committed it to memory; from the Belgian Minister he obtained a letter to the Inspector-General of Telegraphs at Brussels; and he left Berlin before the treaty was signed, apparently disconsolate at defeat. But the treaty was printed in *THE TIMES* before it was signed at Berlin, and Blowitz had won the most splendid victory of his life.

It is a strange triumph, which the most of men would rather miss than win. To us, it seems nothing less than flat burglary. The whole business, of suborning spies and picking up furtive messages, savours too much of the crowbar and jemmy; but it symbolises accurately enough the talent of Blowitz. The world, as he understood it, was simple enough. Kings and ambassadors were pledged to secrecy by an honourable oath. He was pledged, by whatever means he might, to surprise their secrets, and to discover what was in their minds. The proceeding would be intolerable were not the game played on either side with a callous effrontery. The diplomatists, who did not scruple to make use of Blowitz when it suited

their policy, could hardly grumble if, to suit his own, he took away more secrets than they wished to part with. Blowitz could not grumble, if he were charged with performing a task unfit for a gentleman; but if the work is to be done, we cannot imagine any man better adapted by nature to carry it out than Blowitz.

In the first place, he was gifted with a complete absence of humour, which not only permitted him to overlook inevitable rebuffs, but also to exaggerate the importance of his mission. He cherished a child-like confidence that a Supreme Power interested itself exclusively in the intrigues of Blowitz. He faced Bismarck as an equal, and declared that the Prussian Chancellor and the Pope were the only two men who had not disappointed him. In the second place, he was magnificently persistent. If one plan failed him, he was always ready with another. Long practice had given him the habit of ubiquity. He went everywhere; he knew everybody; and he never came away from a place or an interview empty-handed. Give him a hint, and he would confront a statesman with so fine an assumption of knowledge, that the statesman, believing that his interlocutor knew all, would withhold nothing from him. Then, again, he was absolutely fearless,—fearless even of ridicule, which is enough to quell most men into a commonplace career; nor could his worst enemy charge him with disloyalty to his accomplices. He who entrusted Blowitz with a secret knew that the origin of that secret would never be revealed, so that, with *THE TIMES* to aid them, diplomats could fight one another with the weapon of publicity, and never let the world know who armed the journalist's hand.

Moreover, in all his intrigues Blowitz was served by an astounding

memory. Once, when Delane regretted that a speech of Thiers could not appear in to-morrow's paper, the zealous correspondent went off straight to a telegraph-office. "There," to quote his own words, "I put in operation my mnemonic process. Alternately I shut my eyes to see and hear M. Thiers, and then opened them to write out the speech for the wire." In this way he reconstructed the whole oration, telegraphed it to London, and Delane, to his complete surprise, saw his wish realised in *THE TIMES*. So, too, Blowitz remembered the preamble of the Berlin Treaty from a single reading, and this talent alone was enough to place him head and shoulders above his rivals. It is not difficult, therefore, to explain the man's success. His popularity is as easily explicable. He had a trick of taking his readers into his confidence. He gave you the impression that not only was he himself eavesdropping behind the scenes, but that you were there also, listening to the voice of some distinguished diplomatist. "I knew M. Waddington well," says he, on one occasion. "M. Dufaure had deputed me to ask him whether he would agree to take the Foreign Office." It was an unimportant fact and casually introduced, but it was effective enough to throw a simpleton into the midst of political intrigue. Now, this impression is very soothing to the untravelled reader, and Blowitz's letters owed far more to a touch of pomposity than to their inherent wisdom. Of late years, no doubt, the diplomatist was mythical; it was more by habit than by conviction that Blowitz peppered his correspondence with august titles. But for all that, his popularity on this side the Channel steadily increased, while on the other side he was fast losing the confidence of the public. No one, who has lived in Paris of late, could

fail to be struck by the hatred of Blowitz cherished by the journalists who owed most to his example. The reason of this hatred is easy to understand. Blowitz, being naturalised a Frenchman, used the privilege of citizenship to criticise his adopted country with the utmost freedom. He detested the follies of nationalism, anti-Semitism, and the rest, with the fury of an instructed cosmopolitanism ; and the French Press did not hesitate to assail with all the eloquence of their abuse the man whom, in 1875, they called Saviour of the Country. The method of attack was simple enough. The journalists began by describing the correspondent of *THE TIMES* as M. de Blowitz (*né Oppert*), and they went on to call him a Jew, a traitor, and a spy. Blowitz's treatment of their assaults was characteristic. Like M. de Cassagnac, though for another reason, he declined to fight a duel, and there was no other method by which he might chastise his opponents. So he passed all attacks over with a haughty silence, or pilloried the worst of his enemies in *THE TIMES* with a single sentence. Such a system best became a man who was grandiose before all things, who always presented himself to the world with a flourish of trumpets and a beating of drums, who was even used to signalise his arrival at Petites Dalles by hoisting the Union Jack upon the roof of his villa. But the system not merely became him ; it was prudent as well. Even the journalists of France soon tired of abusing a colleague who never sought retaliation upon the field.

And now his work is done, what was it worth ? Very little, indeed. He himself did not rate it highly. "I would rather have written *THE*

*BATTLE OF DORKING*," he confesses, "than have published all the secret documents of the world." That is modest enough, and it puts the best face upon Blowitz's achievements. But there is a far worse side than futility to the work of an over-zealous correspondent. Blowitz liked to think himself an ambassador rather than a journalist, and in so thinking he set an ominously bad example. There is nothing more dangerous to a State than a diplomatist without responsibility, who, indeed, is more highly rewarded in proportion to his indiscretion. A journalist may say what he chooses without fear of impeachment. The heaviest disaster that can fall upon him is the loss of his salary ; and nothing is more foolish than that unqualified persons should go up and down the world, affecting to govern when they know nothing of the art of government. At no time in our history has the Press arrogated more influence to itself than at present, and though it is still over sanguine, the influence which it does possess is wholly bad. We have had enough of the cry "Government by journalism," yet we can never hear it without remembering how much Blowitz did to give it volume. It is not of itself a noble action, to print by trickery a document which the rulers of Europe are unanimous in desiring to withhold : there is an obvious indignity in bribed clerks and changed hats ; and the kindest thing we can say of Blowitz's triumphs is that they would have been better unachieved. In other words, while he did a bad thing, he did it very well ; and though we part from him without rancour, we fervently hope that we shall not look upon his like again.

A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

## THE QUARANTINE KENNELS.

To pet dogs, by which I mean only such dogs as live in the house with us and form as it were a part of the family, there is this peculiarity shared probably by no other domestic animal; namely, that they acquire the habits and to some extent participate in the pleasures of their master and mistress, and learn by degrees to regard them as their associates and companions in place of animals of their own species. Of sporting dogs such as spaniels who are likewise house pets this of course is doubly true. Such is not the case with either cats or horses. With the latter, of course, it is impossible; though when they can make any approach to the same degree of intimacy as dogs enjoy, they may be, and probably are capable of much the same kind of attachments. But cats, however fond they may be of those who feed them and caress them, and it will be readily allowed that they often display wholly disinterested friendships, are never so entirely dependent as dogs are on the human beings who love them. They always have an outdoor society as well to which from time to time they resort, as a man goes to his club. Most cats belong to a club, the garden, the balcony, or the housetop, or they assemble at a Cave of Harmony, coming home only with the milkman.

Now the thoroughly domesticated dog who has lived with us from infancy, sleeps in our room or just outside of it at nights, takes his meals with us, walks with us, and sleeps before the fire or in an easy chair till it is bed-time,—he

never does this. All his pleasures, all his affections are centred in ourselves; he knows when we are ill, or when we are grieved, and shows his joy unmistakeably when we are in good spirits and willing to play with him; in a word he is, as I have said, entirely dependent on us, not only for food and lodging, but for all the happiness of his life. An animal who has been taught to devote himself to us so exclusively as this, whose affections we have, so to speak, monopolised, and who feels at being parted from us greater grief than he is able to express, and greater perhaps than many persons imagine, surely deserves the utmost consideration at our hands, and that no effort should be spared to save him from hardships or miseries which it is at all within our power to prevent.

Surely, therefore, those persons who feel so acutely, as many do, at being parted from their favourites, require no excuse. Their trouble is as much for the dog as for themselves. They think of him as pining for his lost friends, and his lost home. Whether their imaginations play them false or not one can only conjecture; but no one who has ever really loved a dog and understands what a dog can feel, will have much doubt about it; and it is with the object of consoling those who are compelled by the law to separate themselves for a time from their canine associates, that I purpose to give a brief account of the home that is provided for them, and the kind treatment they meet with in it.

It is now the rule that every dog

coming from abroad must be in quarantine for six months; and to kennels near Mitcham in Surrey, under the management of Mr. Alfred Sewell, dogs on landing are immediately conveyed and detained for the prescribed period, on the expiration of which the animal is restored to its owner. Six months is the time specified by authority within which it is possible for symptoms of rabies to reveal themselves. How far such extreme precautions are necessary we shall consider presently, but they are greatly resented by many owners of dogs, who have not scrupled to evade the regulations if they saw a chance of success; so much so, indeed, that the Board of Agriculture has been compelled to issue an order that dogs on arriving at an English port shall only be given up to a "carrying agent," or to someone sent direct from the kennels. The owners, it appears, can no longer be trusted to see them safely delivered there; and as they are compelled to pay the expenses, the cost is to be counted as well as the pain of separation. The Board of Agriculture, it is true, when it can be shown that for three months continuously before going into quarantine the dog has been in the personal custody of its owner, will generally allow it to be released at the expiration of another three. But even so this regulation seems in the opinion of experts to go somewhat beyond the necessities of the case. In the past year, 1902, Mr. Sewell had a thousand dogs from abroad in the Mitcham kennels, and not a single case of rabies among them. He is inclined to think that three months would be sufficient altogether, and he has other suggestions to make for the relief of all parties which shall be noticed in their proper place. Let me hope at all events that the following account may go some way

towards reconciling the most devoted lover of dogs to what is now the law, and help to prevent any more cases of self-sacrifice such as those I shall have to mention.

The kennels are situated about half a mile from Beddington Lane, a station on the line between Mitcham and Croydon, which is easily reached either from Victoria or London Bridge, and the resident manager, Mr. Lawton, is always happy to show visitors over the establishment. Accordingly, after a brisk walk up a rather muddy lane last month, I reached a small door in some high black palings, and on ringing the bell, was soon in the presence of my guide. He had four classes of dogs under his charge; the dogs in quarantine, and the dogs who were not, each being divided again into healthy dogs and dogs in hospital. The charges are for dogs in quarantine from seven to ten shillings a week, for dogs in hospital a varying charge averaging about twelve shillings a week, and for healthy dogs, merely sent there to be taken care of for a time, five shillings a week. The quarantine dogs were, of course, the most numerous, and had a compartment to themselves. Among them were every variety of the canine race, mastiffs, blood-hounds, sporting dogs lately returned from South Africa, collies, St. Bernards, spaniels, dachshunds, the great Danish dogs, Russian wolf-hounds, chow-chows, and last but not least, the irrepressible fox-terrier with Dandies, Airedales, Skyes, Irish terriers, and all his numerous cousins whom it is impossible to remember. They are kept in a double row of loose boxes on each side of a narrow gangway running through the whole length of the building, the boxes for small dogs being four feet by six, and for larger ones seven feet by eight. On the entry of a stranger of course they became clamorous; but

Mr. Lawton's "Be good, be good," uttered in quite low tones, silenced them at once, and it was possible to talk with him without being deafened.

The first thing that strikes one on entering each one of the separate sheds holding from twenty to thirty dogs is the perfect cleanliness and purity of the whole building, together with the total absence of any disagreeable smell. It was just the same in the hospital or out of it. Every dog in his own little cage was kept as clean as possible, with fresh straw, and no food was left standing in the cage after the dog had once eaten what he chose. As none of them seemed hungry this would show that they had just the right quantity of food given them. The short-haired dogs had wooden boxes to sleep in, placed in a kind of little bed-room at the back of the cage, out of the way of all draughts. All alike looked happy and comfortable, and I observed none of those wistful, yearning looks which I had seen before at the Dogs' Home. They looked in excellent condition; and one indication of the personal tenderness with which they are treated was shown in their comparatively friendly attitude towards a stranger, when their first surprise was over.

The hospital is a separate building divided into two compartments, one for dogs requiring surgical treatment, the other for animals afflicted with mange or skin disease of any kind which are kept carefully isolated. All seem to be made as comfortable as they possibly can be in the circumstances. There was a bloodhound there who had been kicked by a horse just over one eye, so adroitly bandaged up that he did not seem to mind it at all. Some of the dogs had nightcaps pulled over their heads, but none of them fretted or fidgeted. Sometimes it is necessary to fix a dog's neck in

a stiff collar to prevent him from biting at an irritated part, or to tie up his leg to prevent him scratching. The only one who did show signs of discomfort was a setter who wore one of these collars; but it was only required, I was told, for a very short time. For distemper a separate building is provided at some distance, but there were no patients in it on the day of my visit, nor had been for some while.

I was glad to have seen this establishment, as my previous experience had rather prejudiced me against veterinary establishments. No dog of mine has ever returned home who has been once sent away from it; and my opinion is that with dogs, as with human beings, careful nursing is necessary as well as medicine, and that for want of the former many animals are lost who might have been saved had they remained at home in the hands of those to whom the most sedulous attention is a labour of love. But after this visit I should have no hesitation in sending my favourite dogs to Beddington Lane. The sweetness and healthiness and, let me add, the cheerfulness of the whole place were very striking; and I trust this assurance will do something to inspire the most tender-hearted ladies with confidence in the Quarantine Kennels, so that no fear for their pets need prevent them either from going abroad or from returning home. The dogs have good exercising-yards where they are let loose several times a day; but they are not walked away from the kennels, as they must not be allowed to come in contact with any other dogs. Mr. Sewell has at present about a hundred and ninety dogs under his care, and the kennels contain two hundred and twenty cages, including some new ones which have recently been completed. Bath-rooms, boilers, the

operating-room and the surgery should all be visited. The food of the dogs consists of bread, biscuits, sheep's head and bullock's head, as well as meat of other kinds, and all have milk who require it.

The kennels at Beddington are the property of the Spratt's Dog Sanatorium Company; they have been in existence for sixteen years, and have always paid five per cent. on the original outlay. There are no other special kennels; but any veterinary surgeon may take a dog into quarantine if he can satisfy the authorities that he has suitable accommodation for it. There are very few such establishments, however, as they necessarily cause a good deal of trouble and entail great responsibility. In the Importation of Dogs Order for 1901 the Board of Agriculture recommend all applicants to resort to the Beddington Lane Sanatorium "where special provision approved by the Board has been made for the careful supervision of imported dogs," and it is stated, "that the experience of the Board has shown that the majority of premises specified by applicants have been found on enquiry at the spot to be unsuitable for the proper fulfilment of the rules laid down by the Department."

When the license is obtained from the Department the dog can only be landed "if confined in a suitable hamper, crate, box, or other receptacle." If a dog is landed in contravention of any of the orders issued by the Board, he is forthwith to be put back for "exportation" as it is worded, though that appears only to mean that he is to be kept on board the vessel till the prescribed conditions are complied with. While they are unfulfilled the Inspector belonging to the Board may take possession of the dog, and if the owner does not apply for it and pay all expenses within ten days, he may destroy it.

Mr. Sewell, whose judgment on the Board's own showing carries great weight with it, regards the quarantine regulations as somewhat over-stringent, and productive of much needless anxiety. Persons who take their pet dogs abroad with them, which they are very often obliged to do, cannot bring them back without a license from the Board of Agriculture, to which the aforesaid conditions are attached. They must go into quarantine for six months, and the owner must pay all expenses. Mr. Sewell is a professional man, hardened by this time, like other doctors, against purely sentimental considerations when they conflict with sanitary laws. But even he, albeit not given to the melting mood, thinks that some allowance should be made for those persons to whom parting with a favourite dog is really a great grief. He would, if possible, try to meet them half way; but the difficulty of modifying the present system without impairing its efficiency is very great.

The hardship, says our Professor in a letter to me, "comes in especially with pet dogs. People in bad health who are obliged to go abroad in the winter often want to take their dogs for company, and for other reasons. To be obliged to put them in quarantine is very hard, especially on ladies who think so much of their dogs, and also on the dogs themselves who are accustomed to so much petting and home comforts. You know, as well as I do, how fond of their dogs people get to be, and to be separated from them so long is, in many cases, a great trouble." These words are quoted in order that readers may recognise in the Manager of the Sanatorium one who can thoroughly sympathise with the feelings of both owners and dogs. Whoever is unfortunate enough to be compelled to send a favourite four-footed companion to the Bedding-

ton establishment may be sure that he will meet with every attention, and be accorded as far as possible "all the comforts of a home" as the school advertisements say. But nothing can compensate either of the two sufferers for the loss of each other's society. Mr. Sewell's experience is that some ladies have even been made ill by it. He knew one lady whose husband died abroad, and who, being obliged to return to England and compelled to part with her dog (her husband's favourite as well as her own), was so depressed by it that her health became seriously affected, and other instances have come within my own experience. On this extreme fondness for dogs I shall have a word or two to say presently; in the meantime let us take Mr. Sewell's suggestions for mitigating the anxiety and distress occasioned by the sanitary rules.

To begin with he is inclined to think that three months' quarantine would be quite long enough. Waiving that point he admits the great difficulty, almost the impossibility, as a general rule, of enforcing quarantine in private houses; but he sees two ways of dealing with it in particular cases. Persons who could afford the expense might have their dog examined every morning by a veterinary surgeon, a process which would be just as efficacious as isolation in the kennels. The charge of course would vary with circumstances, and there could hardly be any fixed fee for town and country alike. This measure, he thinks, would ensure perfect protection for the public. But, however it might work in London or any large town, it would not be very easy of adoption in remote country places, where the nearest veterinary surgeon might be ten or a dozen miles away, and might find it very inconvenient to ride or drive that distance every day in the week for six months. His second suggestion

is that when the owner of the dog has a garden to his house, he might give a guarantee that the dog should not be allowed to go outside of it, or into any public thoroughfare under a heavy penalty. But I believe some similar plan has been already tried, and found impracticable. How could the confinement of the animal within the given limits be ensured without constant, one might say daily and hourly, supervision? How could this be managed either in town or country? The owner might be anxious, as he naturally would be, to give the arrangement every chance of success; but unless the dog were perpetually chained up, it would be a hard matter to prevent his escape at times, considering the carelessness of servants and children, and the roving propensities natural to the animal himself. However, that Mr. Sewell, with all his experience, should offer these suggestions at all, shows that his heart is in the right place, and that if pet dogs can safely be entrusted to anybody, he is the man.

My readers will understand that the foregoing pages have been written without thinking it necessary to apologise for the canine proclivities revealed in them; to take them for granted was part of the day's work. But as there are many excellent persons in the world who are "fond of dogs in their places," and others to whom any warmth of affection for them seems childish and ridiculous, let me conclude these remarks with a word or two in defence of us "poor Indians," who rate our "faithful dog" at a higher value, and deem him worthy, perhaps himself capable, of human sympathies. No one can treat this subject from our own point of view, without appealing to the great authority on our side, Sir Walter Scott. When Camp died the whole of the family stood in tears

about his grave in the little garden behind the house in Castle Street, Scott himself with the saddest expression of countenance his daughter (Mrs. Lockhart) had ever seen him wear ; he apologised for not going out to dinner that day on account of the death "of a dear old friend." My own explanation of the deep attachment for dogs which so many of us cherish, is to be found partly in what has been written at the beginning of this article, partly in another circumstance which, I trust, will be equally appreciated. It is we ourselves who make these animals so entirely dependent on us, and teach them to find all their happiness in our society. By long habit, and constant association with their master or mistress in all the doings of the household, they learn to understand us as we understand them, and to sympathise with all our changing moods, especially in sickness or sorrow. Having thus imbued them so far with human attributes as to make them lean on us and love us above all, or to the exclusion of all, their own species, we in turn feel that affection for them which the absolute dependence of any creature upon ourselves alone, repaid with the most tender fidelity, almost always inspires us, and, let me add, ought to inspire us. We owe it to the dog that he shall find his affection returned ; and it is devoutly to be wished that half the lords of creation were as worthy of it.

The second point is one that I can only touch on very lightly. When a dog dies we feel, in spite of all that has been said or suggested to the contrary, that we shall see him no more. At this point we part company with the poor Indian, and over our favourite's grave we sorrow as one that hath no hope. Even the

most sceptical and hardened of mankind probably retains to the last some lurking, half-conscious notion that the relative whom he sees consigned to the earth is not perhaps wholly or eternally lost to him. For believers, even half-hearted believers, this hope is a comfort at the moment, and makes their sorrow stop short of despair. But when our dog has gone from us the terrible *nevermore* is in our ears, and lends to the last scene a sadness which we do not always experience at the funeral of a fellow-creature, however nearly related to us.

If the philosopher replies that we have no business to allow animals to twine themselves round our hearts in this way, and that none but a fool would do it, we kiss the rod, but we do not envy him his superiority. I would say even of dogs what the poet says of mankind, that

"Tis better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all.

But enough has been said. Mr. Sewell's indulgent and kindly appreciation of the feelings with which dogs are regarded by that portion of the public whom the philosopher despises, and by some at least whom even he must allow to be above contempt, is, I venture to think, abundantly justified. If the love of dogs be a weakness, let the strong-minded go their own way and have one less pleasure in existence. For myself I am glad to know that in the establishment here described science and sympathy have joined hands, and that in consigning a dog to the care of Mr. Sewell no one need be ashamed to tell his love.

T. E. KEBBEL.

## STUDIES IN SHAKESPEARE'S HISTORY.

## VI.—JULIUS CÆSAR.

THERE are few of Shakespeare's plays about which critics have differed more widely than about *JULIUS CÆSAR*. While some place it among the greatest and are almost willing to rank it with *HAMLET* or with *MACBETH*, others condemn it as dull, episodic, and essentially undramatic. And the difference of opinion is as strongly marked concerning the meaning and motive of the play as it is with regard to its merits. It has been variously considered a condemnation and a defence of tyrannicide, a problem-play on the clashing claims of public duty and private friendship, and a dramatic allusion to contemporary events such as the rebellion of Essex against Elizabeth at home, and even, though this is scarcely probable, the murder of the Duke of Guise in France. These conflicting opinions, and still more the fact that it has been so constantly abused as a common-place book of quotations, make it difficult to approach the play with unbiased judgment, and suggest the fear that on a work so often discussed there can be nothing new left to say. The difficulty of throwing any new light on the play is enhanced by the fact that Julius Cæsar is one of the best known of the world's great men. Everyone has some conception of the manner of man he was, and many have strong opinions as to his work and character; great historians have devoted themselves to the study of his life, and little ones have made his name a household

word by means of their hand-books. And yet the last word has not been said, nor indeed is it likely that it ever will be said either about the man or the play. The character and aims of Cæsar must ever be a recurring theme with statesmen and philosophers, because his life and times may be said to contain in little the political problems which trouble every age. The play will always at least stimulate interest, inasmuch as it reflects, whether adequately or not, some of the terrible events which marked the death-struggle of the Roman Republic, illuminated, even though fitfully, by the genius of Shakespeare.

The fall of the Republic forms in itself one of the greatest dramas in history, full of the most striking situations, pregnant with tremendous results, and acted by great and eloquent men. Nothing parallel to it can be found in the history of any other nation. The French Revolution, though fraught with consequences equally important and though even more terrible and dramatic in its course, was often sordid and even silly in its details, and was brought about by men who were politicians rather than statesmen, or philosophisers rather than philosophers. The rebellion of our colonies in America implied consequences the full force of which we have yet to realise, and the American hero, George Washington, was no doubt a great man; but it may be

doubted whether, even when mellowed by the lapse of time, the Declaration of Independence will become an event to strike the imagination of mankind.

We are fortunate indeed, those of us who still dare to regard history as a picture of the past unrolled for our entertainment, in the fact that among the principal actors in the Roman Revolution are to be found some of the most striking figures in history, that the stage is occupied by such men as Julius Cesar, Cicero, Brutus, Antony, and Augustus. An additional boon is the self-consciousness of the actors. The men of that time were not only fighting for great ends and dealing with tremendous interests, but they realised the fact with a burning intensity rarely found in men of action. Cicero, sublimest of egotists, the very fire of whose patriotism is due to his identification of himself with the constitution and of the constitution with himself; Brutus, the type of the political philosopher, ready to sacrifice love and life itself to his ideal; Augustus, whose record of his career as embodied in the inscription of Ancyra tempts us to wonder whether he had not succeeded in deceiving himself as to his political aims while trying to deceive the world; and even the man of action, Julius himself—what other period contains not only such great men, but men who were so thoroughly alive to the importance of the parts they were playing? Consciously or not Shakespeare was most true to the character of the men whom he portrays when he makes the conspirators, after the murder of Cesar, anticipate the dramatic presentation of the deed.

*Cassius.* How many ages hence  
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over  
In states unborn and accents yet  
unknown!

*Brutus.* How many times shall  
Cæsar bleed in sport,  
That now on Pompey's basis lies along  
No worthier than the dust!

*Cassius.* So oft as that shall be,  
So often shall the knot of us be call'd  
The men that gave their country  
liberty.

Shakespeare gave his play the name of the great dictator, but he is not the hero of the piece. According to his custom he has chosen the greatest of his characters to give the title to the play; but this does not imply that Cesar is the hero any more than that Henry the Fourth, Henry the Sixth, or Henry the Eighth are the heroes of the plays which bear their names. Indeed of Cesar himself Shakespeare seems scarcely to have formed a very adequate conception. True he fills but a small space in the play, but it is disappointing to find Shakespeare picturing him as a vain and pompous despot hungering after the outward signs of royalty and speaking of himself with ludicrous solemnity in the third person.

Cæsar shall forth: the things that  
threaten'd me  
Ne'er looked but on my back; when  
they shall see  
The face of Cæsar, they are vanished.

The attitude in which the poet has chosen to draw Cesar is, even apart from other considerations, sufficient to dispose of the idea that the play is intended as a condemnation of regicide. Granting the necessity of emphasising those of his characteristics which would be odious to the republicans of Rome, in order to explain their action, it would nevertheless have been easy and natural for Shakespeare to make Cesar as noble and attractive as he really was if he had wished to condemn the action of his murderers. More credible is

the theory that Shakespeare, content to follow the republican bias of Plutarch, wished to defend the murder of a tyrant. His portrait of Cæsar makes for this belief to the same extent as it throws discredit on the rival opinion. Shakespeare's Cæsar outrages both liberty and good taste, and is thus a most suitable victim for the daggers of the conspirators. But, further, the light in which he places the tyrannicides, especially Brutus, reveals a decided sympathy for them and their ideals. Throughout the play their motives are made to appear creditable (although Antony will allow such motives to Brutus alone), and they are never accused of personal resentment or ambition. And indeed it is but natural that Shakespeare, who was in many respects a true son of the Renaissance, should have at least a literary sympathy with republican aspirations. The scholars of the Renaissance were many of them filled with an ardent republicanism and an often fantastic devotion to the institutions of Rome, and their ideas are inherited to some extent by succeeding generations. That he favoured the conspirators is further indicated by the fact that he took Brutus, and not Cæsar or Antony, as the hero of his play.

But it was not, I think, any question of political ethics which Shakespeare had in his mind when he wrote this play, though such questions necessarily suggested themselves to him in connection with it. Of course it is very dangerous to predicate any theory or meaning for any of Shakespeare's plays, especially for such a one as this, which is to a great extent merely a glorified transcription of Plutarch's Lives of Brutus and Cæsar. It is dangerous, because a modern commentator is only too likely to find his own

philosophy in lines quite innocent of it; and it is rather absurd because Shakespeare was a poet and an artist, not a dramatising theorist, and the simplicity of his genius was as a rule content with grand dramatic effects without the introduction of ethical problems. But, without assuming for the critic the artist's rôle, or even that of the privileged interpreter of visionary difficulties, it is permissible to suggest the broad lines on which a play may have been planned, and to gather from the sentiments expressed an idea as to what may have been the poet's dominant emotion at the time of writing.

I would suggest, then, that the theme of the play is not the question of the justifiability of tyrannicide, but simply friendship,—the friendship of Brutus and Cæsar, of Cæsar and Antony, of Brutus and Cassius, and perhaps also of Brutus and Portia. Subsidiary to this main theme is the motive of the contest between public duty and private friendship; but this is only important as forming part of the masterly analysis of Brutus's character. Here, again, Shakespeare is in complete sympathy with the spirit of his time; I mean in his glorification of friendship. Often as the Elizabethan age has been compared to the golden age of Athens, their similarity, so far as I am aware, has scarcely been noticed in respect of their great admiration for the friendship of men. Just as to Plato and his school the love of women was something which, by its very nature, must fall far short of the highest ideal of love, while the love of men for each other was the highest and most beautiful thing in life, so to the Elizabethans, for all that their conception of the relations of men and women was so much higher than that of the Greeks, yet friendship

remains the worthiest, the most precious of life's gifts. It is not necessary to leave Shakespeare for an illustration of this belief. The Sonnets are and must remain the most marvellous expression of passionate friendship, in which the great musician plays with unerring touch upon every mood of a love wonderful indeed and "passing the love of women." The otherwise somewhat absurd dénouement of *THE Two GENTLEMEN OF VERONA* is explained, if we regard Valentine's offer to resign Silvia to the faithless Proteus as an example of the triumph of friendship; while the friendship of Hamlet and Horatio is not the least beautiful thing in the greatest of all the plays. And a man of such eminence as Lord Brooke reckoned it among his chief titles to honour, to be inscribed on his tomb-stone, that he was "The Friend of Sir Philip Sidney."

Once more then, in *JULIUS CÆSAR*, Shakespeare returns to this favourite subject. Brutus, the hero of the play and the chief friend among the characters, seems to have been greatly admired by the finest spirits of all parties in Rome. He was the hope of the republican party, which, because of his ancestry, his relationship to Cato, and the known severity of his Stoic philosophy, looked to him to save Rome from Cæsar and imperial licence. It was necessary to persuade him to join the conspiracy in order to gain for it the credit of his name. As Casca says :

O, he sits high in all the people's hearts;  
And that which would appear offence  
in us,  
His countenance, like richest alchemy,  
Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

With Cicero, who shared the general enthusiasm for him, and who, besides,

No. 521.—VOL. LXXXVII.

always delighted in the society of younger men, his relations were most intimate. He cheered Cicero in despondency, skilfully alluding to that favourite and well-worn theme, the Catilinarian conspiracy; while Cicero, both in his letters and in the works which he dedicated to him, goaded on the younger man to restore her liberty to Rome. But, if he was admired and looked up to by the Republicans, he was also peculiarly dear to Cæsar. The dictator's affection for him was so marked that the story was even suggested that Brutus was really Cæsar's son, a story which received some colour from Cæsar's well-known intimacy with Servilia, the mother of Brutus. And, though this story was absurd and unfounded, the relations between them were like those of father and son.

For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel :

Judge, O ye gods, how dearly Cæsar loved him !

It is of course their affection for each other which lends such an extraordinary interest to Brutus's share in the murder of Cæsar. There must have been something peculiarly wrong with one who could kill the man whom he loved, and who had in a hundred ways shown his love for him, for the mere sake of a political principle. For it is certain that Brutus was no fool in the ordinary sense of the word. He was a fair soldier, had been governor of a province, and it was his intellectual attainments, as much as his character, which gained him such universal respect in Rome. His intimacy with Cæsar had given him every opportunity of understanding his greatness, and one would think that a man of his ability must sometimes have been able to perceive the rottenness of the Republican constitution, as it then was, and the necessity of

some such drastic remedy as Caesar proposed. But apparently he saw neither. A student, forced by circumstances to become a man of action, he is the very type of the doctrinaire politician, and seems in his own person to stultify Plato's ideal of the philosopher-king. He acted ever by rule and maxim, regardless of circumstances and the dictates of his own feelings; and if Cicero, as has been said, was an impossible combination of an opportunist and an idealist, in Brutus we find the idealist pure and simple, so hampered by his own ideals that he works his own ruin and that of those he loves without ever realising his dream.

Shakespeare has very strongly emphasised this aspect of Brutus's character. Again and again he pictures him as the slave of a morbidly sensitive conscience, torn between his love for his friends and his hatred of violence on the one hand, and on the other a passionate devotion to principles coupled with a mania for consistency. He has no personal feeling against Caesar, nor yet any present fault to find with him; but he fears what effect the royal title may have on him,—the nervous dread of a political theorist.

For my part  
I know no personal cause to spurn at  
him,  
But for the general. He would be  
crown'd:  
How that might change his nature,  
there's the question.  
It is the bright day that brings forth  
the adder;  
And that craves wary walking. Crown  
him?—that;  
And then, I grant, we put a sting in  
him,  
That at his will he may do danger  
with.

Yet he admits Caesar's eminent reasonableness:

To speak truth of Cæsar,  
I have not known when his affections  
sway'd  
More than his reason.

But then, afraid where Cæsar's ambition may lead him, he forces himself to forge out of his own fears a chain of unsubstantial reasons for his deed.

And since the quarrel  
Will bear no colour for the thing he is,  
Fashion it thus; that what he is, aug-  
mented,  
Would run to these and these ex-  
tremities:  
And therefore think him as a serpent's  
egg  
Which, hatch'd, would, as his kind,  
grow mischievous,  
And kill him in the shell.

Truly a man who could argue thus was a politician of the most dangerous type, one who in his blind attachment to theory, in his insistence on the fact that he was attacking principles not persons, would wreck his own side as well as that of his adversaries. And so it proved; the obstinate refusal of Brutus to let Antony share Cæsar's fate, and his folly in allowing him to speak publicly to the people, completely spoiled whatever chances of success the conspirators ever had.

But, while we condemn Brutus as a practical statesman, we ought not to over-look the essential nobility of his character, or forget the prolonged agony he must have endured during the weeks in which the plot against Cæsar's life was being matured. He was the most fervid of all patriots, but he was also a true lover; and if one cannot help suspecting a certain want of vitality, a kind of bloodlessness in a man who in all circumstances could prefer principles to persons, that may only be because with most of us patriotism has never attained to the intensity of a personal affection. There is a

fine pathos, as well as a sincerity, about his brief and unemotional appeal to the people which one misses in the magnificent oration of Antony.

If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Cæsar's, to him I say that Brutus' love to Cæsar was no less than his. If then that friend demand why Brutus rose against Cæsar, this is my answer:—Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Cæsar were living and die all slaves, than that Cæsar were dead, to live all free men? As Cæsar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it: as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him.

Though we may condemn the exaggerated self-sacrifice implied in this speech, we cannot but pity, and even admire it also.

Cassius, the other chief conspirator, was a very different type of man, and presents a very different aspect of the conspiracy. To us who, living so many hundreds of years afterwards, can perceive without prejudice the terrible corruption, disorder, and inefficiency of political life in the last days of the Roman Republic, it may seem strange that so many men could be found to cling to that life and believe in the old constitution. But it must be remembered that the old constitution gave to the Roman of the upper class all that made life worth living. To the Roman noble the Republic offered a career of such wide and varied interest as could scarcely fall to the lot of a man of any other nation or at any other time. He might, and probably would, if he were a man of even moderate ability, fill a series of offices in the city, all of them of some interest and some importance, culminating in the consulship when, with his colleague, he would be for a year the almost absolute ruler of the Roman State.

After holding the offices of *prætor* and *consul* he would, as *pro-prætor* or *pro-consul*, become for a year, or in some cases longer, the general of a great army and the master of a province as big as a large modern country with the opportunity of amassing enormous wealth, of acquiring much curious knowledge, and of achieving a great reputation. When in Rome, whether in or out of office, he was a member of the Senate which, except when the consuls were unusually strong men, was the virtual leader of the Roman world. Thus the Roman noble in the days of the Republic would always be breathing the strong air of political excitement; the State was alive, however great its disorder, and the citizen was an individual whose own influence would always count for something and often for much, not a mere unit among the millions of one man's subjects.

With the ascendancy of Cæsar all this was at once changed. It is true that Julius himself, and the earlier emperors preserved the semblance of Republican forms; but they were only empty forms. The Senate, the consuls, and all the other magistrates only existed to do the bidding of the master of the State and to cover the nakedness of his tyranny; the individual initiative, the mistakes, the misgovernment of the Republican magistrate gave place to the machine-like regularity of a bureaucracy strictly controlled by the will of one man. It is easy to imagine what a tragedy this complete collapse of public life must have been to the political Roman. Life must have seemed utterly barren when deprived of the great and the petty excitements of the forum and the senate-house, when the elections were always a foregone conclusion and office carried with it no power. Even to Cicero, who could find some consolation in

his books, his philosophy, and his keen enjoyment of a cultivated society, Rome, as he himself says, seemed a desert. What, then, must have been the feelings of the ordinary man who depended entirely on politics for his daily interests? And it is this type of man which Cassius represents. In him we find none of the high ideals and lofty aspirations of Brutus. It is no virtuous principle which drives him into crime, and neither is he troubled by any moral struggle before taking his resolution, nor does he mar the effect of his action by any hesitation when once his decision has been made. He is only filled with a bitter resentment that the life which had been the property of all should now be absorbed by one; and thus he rapidly grows to hate the man who has deprived him of that for which alone he cares. It is thus that Shakespeare has drawn him for us. To Brutus, when urging him to take part in the conspiracy, he cries :

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow  
world  
Like a Colossus, and we petty men  
Walk under his huge legs and peep  
about  
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.

\* \* \* \* \*

Rome, thou has lost the breed of noble  
bloods!  
When went there by an age, since the  
great flood,  
But it was famed with more than with  
one man?  
When could they say till now, that  
talk'd of Rome,  
That her wide walls encompass'd but  
one man?  
Now is it Rome indeed and room  
enough,  
When there is in it but one only man.

This speech is typical of his attitude throughout the struggle in which he played such a prominent part. It is not Rome which he is thinking of, although he professes to

regard it as a disgrace to the city that one man should possess all the power; but he is angry at his own exclusion from political life and will spare no one who may be responsible for it. The murder of Cæsar was inevitable; the Roman aristocrats did not understand him, nor could they perhaps be expected to see that their privileges, and the constitution which embodied them, must give place to a new order of things adequate to the work which the Roman Empire had to do. But it was none the less a lamentable blunder, plunging the Empire into a terrible civil war and thereby giving to the imperial power that taint of militarism which, though veiled by the seeming constitutionalism of Augustus, proved fatal to so many of his successors.

But in his portrait of Cassius Shakespeare has also been careful to give us a glimpse of the more attractive side of his character. The atmosphere of the play, as I have already suggested, is coloured throughout by the idea of friendship, and in creating this effect the friendship of Brutus and Cassius plays an important part. Cassius, as Shakespeare draws him for us, is a hard man, morose, quarrelsome, and self-seeking; but he is also a man of strong affections and sensitive to the least slight from those he loves. Like so many of his contemporaries, he was irresistibly attracted by the character of Brutus; and, though at first he seems only anxious to make use of his reputation for the purposes of the conspiracy, yet it is soon apparent that Brutus and Cassius were friends as well as allies. It is characteristic of Cassius that his affection for his friend is first apparent in the course of a violent quarrel. Brutus, faithful to his principles and regardless of the extreme inopportu-

tuneness of his virtuous indignation, has angered him beyond bearing by blaming him violently because he has at least countenanced the corrupt dealing of one of his officers. Cassius is furious, and the more so that it is the one man whom he loves who dares to beard him thus. Yet his anger soon turns to grief that he has lost his friend's love, and thus Shakespeare shows us that Cassius also, the least amiable figure in the play, had his human side, and that he too, like Brutus, Antony, and Cæsar, cherished a friendship sorely beset by the troubles of the time.

But after Brutus the most important character in the play is undoubtedly Antony. Next to Richard the Second and Prince Henry, Antony is the most carefully delineated of all Shakespeare's historical personages. Of course the poet's idea of him is only fully developed in *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*, and in this play he gives us a mere glimpse of the man compared with the wonderful portrait of the later drama; but his place here is both so important and so interesting that he cannot be passed over in silence. The character of Antony is far more complex than that of either Brutus or Cassius, combining many of the elements of both and much more as well; moreover he is a worse man and a greater man than either. Ambitious and pleasure-loving, luxurious and energetic, an affectionate, though scarcely a trustworthy, friend, and an unscrupulous politician, it was well for Shakespeare that the life of Antony, being such a man, seems historically to fall within two periods, so that he could quite naturally take two plays in which to develop his idea of him. He first appears in this play as the confidant of Cæsar, who because of Antony's love of ease and pleasure seems to regard

him as a safe man in whom implicit trust can be placed; as if only the grave and virtuous could be inclined towards conspiracy, and as if Cæsar would forget the career of Cælius, the slave of pleasure and the prince of intriguers. It shows how little trouble Shakespeare took to understand Cæsar that he makes him put complete confidence in Antony, whom he can never have trusted and whose loyalty was more than doubtful during the last part of Cæsar's life. He contrasts him with Cassius, of whom he says:

He reads much;  
He is a great observer and he looks  
Quite through the deeds of men; he  
loves no plays  
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no  
music;  
Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such  
a sort  
As if he mock'd himself and scorn'd  
his spirit  
That could be moved to smile at any-  
thing.

The characterisation of Cassius is excellent, but the inference implied in the contrast with Antony is not such as a man of Cæsar's insight would have made,—unless perhaps Shakespeare means us to understand that Antony's hypocrisy was such as to deceive Cæsar himself.

For there was much of the actor about Antony, doubtless an actor who found pleasure in mere acting, but that only made him the more consummate player. Observe his conduct in the extraordinarily difficult position of Cæsar's friend after the murder of the dictator, when the conspirators seemed for the moment triumphant. He dared not openly resent Cæsar's death and yet it would be improbable, improper, and inartistic to feign indifference or approval; besides that he really loved Cæsar and grieved for his death and, actor as he was, could scarcely have at once completely

controlled his grief. Accordingly he steers a middle course with the utmost skill. Pretending to acquiesce in the wisdom of the conspirators' decision and asking only that

Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony  
May safely come to him, and be  
resolved  
How Caesar hath deserved to lie in  
death,

he assumes the part of the simple, impulsive man who, while overcome with sorrow at his friend's death, would not think of doubting the virtue of

The choice and master spirits of this  
age,

at whose hands he craves his own death as an honour. Thus completely hood-winking his enemies, or at least Brutus, as to his intentions, he reconciles himself with them and in the midst of the reconciliation breaks forth again into grief for Cæsar, blaming himself for making friends with his murderers. And so perfectly does he act his part that even now we are left in doubt as to whether he was the more influenced by genuine emotion or by the feeling that perhaps his reconciliation had been too speedy, and that propriety and probability alike demanded a fresh outburst of grief in the presence of the conspirators to lull any possible suspicion.

But it is in his great funeral oration that Antony's power of acting a part shines forth most eminent. Much as we may admire this speech as a piece of magnificent rhetoric, it is even more interesting in the light it throws on the character of the speaker. Beginning with the mob hostile to him, he gradually works them up to adoration for Cæsar and uncontrollable fury against his murderers; and yet his mere words could scarcely be accused of the intent which is plain

in the whole tenour of the speech. He never over-steps the limits set him by Brutus, but with consummate art uses them as his most effective weapon for stirring the people's feelings against the conspirators. But most illuminating of all is his own evident enjoyment of his task. Sad as he is at Cæsar's death (for there is plenty of genuine feeling in the speech), he uses his very grief as a means of rousing the anger of the mob, and, what is more remarkable, he clearly enjoys doing so. The speech is, indeed, more than rhetoric; for the "Brutus is an honourable man" repeated over and over again as a sort of refrain, ever with some fresh pathos or more bitter irony, makes what would otherwise only be fine rhetoric almost lyrical, a true threnody,—but again is he perhaps mocking us also? Is it done more to praise his friend, to relieve his own distress and wrath, or to gain his ends? Or is it perhaps most of all for the mere pleasure in the doing of it?

From a political point of view his allusion to Cæsar's will, and then his feigned reluctance to read it, is the most effective part of the speech, for he knows that, once the mob have been made to understand that they benefit thereby, he need have no fear for his revenge and thenceforth may be bolder in his language. But he keeps up his fine ironical hypocrisy to the last, and thus gaining the mutiny he deprecates, upon his friend's death he builds up the splendid perilous fabric of his own magnificence. He learns that Octavius has come to Rome, and, already flushed with pleasure at his success with the people, he seems at once to forget his grief.

He comes upon a wish. Fortune is  
merry  
And in this mood will grant us any-  
thing.

Antony is, then, to use a modern cant phrase, the man of the moment. A masker and a reveller he may be, as Cassius calls him, but a masker who will act himself into empire and a reveller who will make the world his play-ground, a man who can use his friend's death, his own grief, even his enemies' momentary success, all as weapons in his fight for power.

When Shakespeare drew such life-like portraits of Brutus, Cassius, and Antony, we cannot but regret that he did not give us a more adequate picture of Cæsar himself. The reasons for the slightness of his sketch have been discussed over and over again without any really satisfactory conclusion being reached. It may be that Shakespeare thought Cæsar impossible of treatment as a dramatic hero, and there would be good grounds for such a belief. It must not be forgotten that, though Cæsar's was a life full of great and thrilling incident, its striking moments are separated by long intervals, and there is little dramatic unity in his career till its last moments; and then, as Shakespeare clearly saw, Cæsar was not the hero but the victim. This may account for the poet's not having written a play with the dictator for its hero, but it does not explain why he gives such slight recognition to Cæsar's great qualities. For that Cæsar was not a pompous fool, consumed with a vain desire for regal honours, is agreed by all, by those who admire him and by those who do not. As soldier, statesman, writer, or man of pleasure he is eminent among the men of all time; and as a combination of all the qualities implied in each of these characters he stands among the very greatest of the world's great men. He alone of the men of that time, as has been said, knew what he wanted and went

straight towards it. While Pompey never knew his own mind from one moment to another, and while Cicero, clinging fondly to an out-worn constitution, strove hopelessly to unite respectable mediocrity in its support, Cæsar cut without hesitation at the root of all the evils of the time; to save the State the old constitution must go, and he was the only man who could construct a new one.

But Brutus says he was ambitious;  
And Brutus is an honourable man.

And so he was ambitious, and Brutus was the very soul of honour; but if ambition be an infirmity, it is an infirmity without which most men are worthless, and the honesty of Brutus was of very little value, nay even harmful both to himself and his country, considering the times in which he lived.

To two alone among Cæsar's virtues does Shakespeare give due recognition, but they are those for which he was most conspicuous, his courage and his resolution; the courage which enabled him to face vastly superior numbers of savage enemies in Gaul and Germany, and which forbade him to shrink from the constant danger of assassination in Rome, and the resolution which, in the midst of so many waverers, made him go straight forward without hesitation to his goal.

Danger knows full well  
That Cæsar is more dangerous than  
he:  
We are two lions littered in one day,  
And I the elder and more terrible.

And when the conspirators beg for the repeal of Cimber's sentence of banishment, he recognises the uniqueness of his own resolution.

I could well be moved, if I were  
as you;

If I could pray to move, prayers would move me :  
 But I am constant as the northern star,  
 Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality  
 There is no fellow in the firmament.  
 The skies are painted with unnumber'd sparks,  
 They are all fire and everyone doth  
 shine,  
 But there's but one in all doth hold  
 his place.  
 So in the world ; 'tis furnished well  
 with men,  
 And men are flesh and blood and apprehensive ;  
 Yet in the number I do know but one  
 That unassailable holds on his rank,  
 Unshaken of motion ; and that I  
 am he,  
 Let me a little show it, even in this ;  
 That I was constant Cimber should be  
 banish'd  
 And constant do remain to keep  
 him so.

But here also Shakespeare makes Cæsar speak with an egotism which is almost fatuous, as though to show that arrogance such as his must surely provoke divine Nemesis.

As for his private life, Cæsar was, it is said, a man whom few men and no woman could resist. And yet,—and it is the saddest thing about his life, far more terrible than his death—he had no true friends ; and this, although his boundless generosity, the charm of his manner, and his wide culture often won him the liking of the most convinced among his political opponents. The fact is that, as Cicero once said of himself, he had

no time to live. Always occupied, at least in the latter part of his life, either in his great campaigns or his political designs, there was no leisure left him, even if the capacity survived, to build up those friendships in the enjoyment of which men may most truly be said to live. And thus he was left entirely alone. He had carved his way through men's prejudices and acted without regard to scruple, till at last he found himself hated by his opponents, used by his allies merely for their own advancement, and trusted by none. Yet one friend he had, or thought he had, in Brutus. It is perhaps not too fanciful to regard his friendship with Brutus as the one real romance of Cæsar's life, the one part of it which was dear to him as a man, and in which he could forget the cares of politics. If so, it most fitly crowns this tragedy of friendships sorely tried that the man whom he loved like a son should be the chief of the conspiracy against his life.

This was the most unkindest cut of all ;  
 For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,  
 Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,  
 Quite vanquish'd him ; then burst his mighty heart ;  
 And, in his mantle muffling up his face,  
 Even at the base of Pompey's statue,  
 Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.

J. L. ETTY.

## AVE ATQUE VALE.

WHEN all the lights are gone,  
 And the wind's monotone  
 Wails round the vacant throne  
 That once was yours,  
 Ah ! to your death-lit eyes,  
 Poet, what scene shall rise,  
 As the pale phantom flies  
 From earthly lures ?

Yea, when the angel strips  
 The shroud from eyes and lips  
 What dread Apocalypse  
 Shall stun your gaze,  
 Watching, alone and mute,  
 The Power that fools refute,  
 Awful and absolute  
 Before all days ?

There the philosopher  
 Sits dumb and shamed, and there  
 Rot the old pomps that were  
 Earth's hallowed things ;  
 Kaisers and kings, who rode  
 Wide o'er the world in blood,  
 Stand naked before God,  
 Queller of kings.

Pallid and bound they go  
 Before whose spears the foe  
 Melted like trampled snow,  
 Whirled out like smoke ;  
 Legions, beneath whose mass  
 Strong cities crashed like glass,  
 Drop swords at length, and pass  
 Beneath the yoke.

You see them pass,—yea, all  
 The boast of Hannibal,  
 Blue waves of steel that crawl  
     With blood-red foam,—  
 Lo ! these were even thus  
 When by the Aufidus  
 Rose, wild and ominous,  
     The roar of *Rome* !

They vanish. Near them ride  
 Sardis and Susa's pride,  
 Who choked the greedy tide  
     Of Salamis :—  
 These fade. They too are gone  
 Who clashed at Marathon ;  
 Hellene and Mede are one,  
     At last, in peace.

Oh victor Death ! no more  
 The lean Cimmerians pour  
 Round beaked ships cast ashore  
     On Chersonese ;  
 Attila's wolves, who foam  
 Drunk still with blood of *Rome*,  
 Even for them a home,  
     Even for them peace.

Queens, whose caprices rent  
 Empire and continent,  
 Proud courtesans who bent  
     Kings with their smile,—  
 Though many a diadem  
 Stooped to their kirtle-hem,  
 This is the end of them  
     And all their guile.

Ah ! is indeed Death's gate  
 The garner ultimate  
 Of the wild love and hate  
     That burnt them all ?  
 Surely beyond the sun  
 The grim centurion  
 Still leads his Romans on  
     Against the Gaul ;

O'er the great plains that lie  
Behind the furthest sky  
Still glides the panoply  
    Of phantom hosts ;  
Still in some scarlet star  
Pale kings whirl out to war,  
And spectral engines jar  
    The walls of ghosts.

Not theirs, not theirs, to see  
The listless empery  
Of pale Persephone,  
    Or taste her fruit ;  
Not theirs the shades who rove  
Within her pensive grove,  
Dead to the lips of love,  
    The Orphic lute.

But still across the snow  
The fierce Phœnicians go ;  
Still bleaching cities show  
    Where Xerxes trod ;  
Yea, though the old world end,  
Friend still avenges friend,  
Giant and king contend,  
    Titan and god.

Far o'er the starry shoals  
The roaring war-tide rolls  
Of those whose fiery souls  
    No tomb immures.  
Ah ! when Death's finger lies  
Cold on your glazing eyes,  
Poet, be this your prize,  
    This vision yours !

ST. JOHN LUCAS.

## A DAY OF REST.

THE ancient Mexicans divided the year into weeks of five days. They held a fair on the fifth day, so that after four days of work a man desisted from labouring in his vocation and carried his produce to market. The conquerors of the Mexican imposed upon him, with the Catholic religion, the week of seven days, and the seventh became the market day instead of the fifth. Over the greater part of the country Sunday has not yet become a day of rest; at most it brings a change of occupation. In the villages of the hot lowlands (*tierra caliente*) it is the busiest day of the week. Once a month or so the tawdry old church has its turn of the priest of the district, who mumbles an early mass or two, and on these occasions the Indian gives a quarter of an hour to his "duty" before beginning the real business of the day. But there is no restful dreamful dozing, no Sunday School, only newly washed clothes and a great deal of buying and selling, gossiping, gambling, drinking and flirting, and frequently, the natural result of these last, fighting.

To prepare for the weekly market on Sunday the up-river Indian improvises a rude raft, two or three young trees roughly chopped down, and lashed together with some of the pliant vines that crowd the tropical forest. On it he places his little store of maize, coffee, rubber, cacao or tobacco, and with a slender pole skilfully guides his frail vessel down stream. When he lands his goods on the river bank at the village he abandons the raft and with the pro-

duce of his cargo supplies himself with the commodities he wants, a blanket, sandals, salt, a knife, a cheap gun, a gay handkerchief, a jar of native rum. Probably before nightfall he is drunk; but by next morning's dawn, if he has not got into gaol, he is away through the forest paths to his home, his unconsumed purchases on his back. If he lives down stream from the village, he poles his canoe up and returns in it. If he comes overland by road, the stout backs of his womenkind carry their full share of the burdens. The less distant bring to town provisions to furnish meals for those who have travelled farther, and squat in the market-place selling their maize-cakes (*tortillas*) and other Indian eatables.

The British or American settler, accustomed at home to a peaceful Sunday, sometimes tries to introduce the custom on his own plantation. He fails, even when it, like the one in which I write, is far from town or village.

We are here in the *tierra caliente*, on the picturesque frings of the Sierra Madre mountains. The house stands on a height above the river, so far back as to leave room for the road and a few dark orange trees between it and the steeply descending bank. The river is invisible directly in front, but to the right the eye can follow a long stretch of it as it comes shimmering down between its densely wooded banks. The great trees that overhang the water are covered almost to their topmost branches with long trailing vines, whose hanging leaves form a close green curtain

between the river-way and the forest. The river itself in the sunshine looks like a broad highway of burnished silver between cliffs of emerald. On the left, a hundred yards down stream, the ground is partly cleared of trees, and slopes gently to the water's edge, and there the river bends away to the right, leaving a broad stretch of sand and gravel beside a quiet pool in which the people bathe.

For Belén, our cook, Sunday begins, as the Sabbath did for the ancient Hebrews and for our Puritan ancestors, on Saturday evening. It is then that, when dinner is over and all her pots are scoured, the dishes washed and placed on the rack, her fires raked out and the floor of the kitchen swept, she starches and irons her weekly clean sprigged-muslin skirt. This is a work of no mean skill, as we can see, for the process is carried out in public on the verandah. The starched muslin is delicately damped before the iron passes over it. Belén takes a sip of water in her mouth and with a long breath ejects it from her lips in the finest imaginable spray over the surface of the cloth. The hot iron, whose temperature she first tries with the palm of her left hand, follows the slender shower. Next day Belén appears in a billowy skirt, its ample folds gathered simply at her ample waist. Above the skirt she wears a snow-white chemise, sleeveless and cut low, so as to exhibit in full her polished chocolate arms and shoulders. Round her sinewy neck a tiny red and blue silk handkerchief is loosely pinned; her thick hair shines with our best cooking lard, and on her head is a steeple-crowned *sombrero* as large as a parasol; in her firm and rosy lips she holds a big, strong, black cigar, and a crimson paper rose is stuck behind her ear.

Belén's full name is Maria de Belén

Rodriguez, Mary of Bethlehem Rodriguez. There are many Maries, for, when a child is born, the calendar is consulted and the infant receives the name of the saint whose day it happens to be. This has the advantage of always letting people know when their friends' birthdays come round, so that they may offer their felicitations punctually. Mary of Guadalupe, Mary of the Pillar and Mary of Jesus are respectively called, for short, Lupe, Pilár and Chucha. Our Mary is called Belén, which, being of the Coast, she pronounces Beléng through her very sharp nose. She is rather tall and elderly, very dark, very ugly, and as hard as whicord. Besides being a cook of much knowledge and experience, she can manage a canoe and ride a horse, and she has a temper which has earned for her the nickname of *La Tarantula*. In addition to her monthly wages Belén gets one real's (about sixpence) worth of soap and half a pound of starch every week. This is an allowance we are very glad to make, and we think we get value for it in her appearance on Sunday.

Procopio, who milks the cows, is a hardworking little man with a broad face and a pair of very strong bow legs. He wears the usual cotton shirt and cotton trousers, the shirt hanging loose over the trousers, a cool and agreeable manner of wearing it and one suited to the climate. The authorities of one of the principal Mexican cities recently decreed that no one should be permitted to enter its precincts wearing his shirt in this manner. I inquired into the reason of this singular sumptuary law, and learned that it was merely a corollary to an edict prohibiting the wearing of arms at the fairs and other festivals; a knife or pistol was so easily concealed under the loose shirt. In the country such restrictions are not

thought of, and Procopio wears his snow-white shirt to-day as Hodge in Buckinghamshire wears his smock frock. But this is not all. Procopio turns up one trouser just as any other gentleman does in muddy weather, but, unlike any other gentleman, he rolls up the other above the knee. This arrangement is too habitual to be accidental, but I am unable to explain it. Perhaps his ancestors, for some sufficient but now forgotten reason, wore one leg bare, and the habit is a survival like the buttons on the back of a coat. In that case if I inquired of Procopio himself it is unlikely that he could tell me, any more than his wife, Teresa, could tell me why she, like the other ladies of her race, puts the end of her scarf, or, if she does not happen to be wearing it, her brown hand before her mouth when she speaks to me, which certainly does not help me to understand her. Probably she could not explain why she does it. It may be that she has learned the custom from her mother, who learned it from hers, who learned it from the Spaniards, who learned it from the Moors, who, being Mahomedans, made their women veil their faces in the presence of men.

Procopio is no eight-hours man. His hours are the twenty-four, or any of them in which there is work to be done. He rises very early in the morning. For reasons, we like the milk brought to the house direct, and the can placed where it can be seen. If I am not already awake, he wakens me as he opens the door to bring it in. He comes at an hour which varies casually from half-past two to half-past five. The Indian, like the horse, seems to need little sleep, and his customary toilet takes scarcely more time than theirs. A yawn and a shake suffice on week-days. Procopio is intelligent and has learnt to know

the hour by looking at the clock, but he can tell it almost as well by looking at the sky. His milking-time however depends on his luck in getting the cows together. The cows are neither housed nor tethered. They are wild, light-limbed creatures, as active as deer and little more domesticated. In the hot day-time they stand in the river, or push into the deepest forest shades, to escape as much as they can the burning sun and the troublesome flies. The night is their chief feeding-time, when they wander over the partly cleared land or seek the long grasses by the water side.

Waking on Procopio's entrance with his lantern and pail, I rise if it is not too early, and dress, careful to pull on my boots before setting my feet on the ground, and also to shake out the boots before pulling them on, for a scorpion or a toad may have chanced to take up its lodging in them during the night. I go outside. Lights are twinkling in the workers' kitchen, where the women are busy on their knees, grinding the maize and baking the *tortillas*, and the morning coffee is bubbling in the pot. Overhead the sky is clear but dark, and seems stretched like black velvet above the twinkling stars. Jupiter blazes low in the East, and a tiny spark that shimmers close to his rim I fancy to be one of his moons. The pole-star almost rests upon the tree tops, and over the opposite horizon stands up feebly the cripple Southern Cross. A low faint paleness tinges the eastern sky. The heavy dew is bending down every leaf and twig on the trees and every blade of grass. An hour after sunrise it will have mounted up in vapour and covered the sky with a curtain of cloud. An hour later that will have been warmed into transparency, and the empty sky will be again as clear

as when every star seemed to hang below it in space.

Soon or late after Procopio's arrival comes the house-boy, Aurelio, wrapped in his *zarape* against the cool morning air. Being a friend of the cook, he lights her fires for her, saturating the sticks lavishly with petroleum when he can lay his hands on it. Her fires, for she uses three, are conveniently made on a table in the centre of the kitchen. This table is a rough affair and rests on four stout posts driven into the ground. It is covered with earth five or six inches deep, which is prevented from falling off by a ledge. The fires have burnt the earth hard, and the wood ashes have made it smooth and grey. The space under the table is convenient for keeping the firewood. The pot over each fire rests, after the Mexican fashion, upon three stones, and the fire is made of sticks arranged in the form of a star. The converging points are lit, and, as they burn, the sticks are thrust further in. The smoke finds its way out through the palm roof of the house, which it has blackened till the cedar rafters look like ebony. Belén smokes the house without smoking the dinner, at least not more than one learns to tolerate. She boils the milk for the morning coffee in a round jug of thin earthenware without a lid, and says that the way to keep it from the smoke is to boil it uncovered.

Before going out to work the men get hot coffee. It is made very sweet with the coarse brown sugar of the country, and each man, as his name is called, comes up with his bowl and gets his ladleful along with the first of his daily allowance of maize-cakes. He then squats down and eats his breakfast in a position which no man whose ancestors have sat on chairs can ever learn to adopt. Presently a bell rings, the men are mustered in line, the roll is called, the tools

are given out and the gangs are sent off to work. As it is Sunday they only do a task of three or four hours, for which they receive no wages. It is supposed to be an equivalent for the day's food and lodging, and is called the *faena*.

The gangs started, I drink my coffee and then go to attend to the sick. This is a work that has to be done every day in the week, for on a plantation there are always some people sick, and almost always some shamming.

The thatched portico of the house, locally named the *corredor*, is the dispensary, and here the sufferers, true or feigned, wait their turn with Indian patience, a picturesque little crowd in the level sunshine of the morning. Those who have fever are wrapped in their gaudy blankets. A man who has a sore head has a bright handkerchief tightly knotted round the base of his skull. A woman with a headache fixes a little bit of sticking-plaster, the size of a sixpence, on each temple. Sore legs are tied up in dirty rags. Women have brought bowls or bottles to carry away the medicine for patients who cannot leave their beds.

The treatment is of necessity a little rough and ready, and such common-sense and experience as may be available have to supply the place of professional skill. A good store is kept of Epsom salts and quinine, a roll of sticking-plaster, some phenicated vaseline, a little laudanum, a little ammonia for snake-bites and scorpion-stings, a little turpentine wherewith to treat the hideous *moyocuil* preparatory to squeezing him out of the great inflamed ball he makes under your skin. A poultice is easily made with hot milk and bread, or failing these (and they are often failing) the ever clean and convenient soap and sugar. Arnica

grows wild among the mountains, and the Indians themselves make an infusion of this wonderful healer of wounds.

Alejandro, the tall mountaineer who has charge of our working bulls, is my first patient. His big straw *sombrero* is pulled low over his eyes, his scarlet blanket covers his mouth and nose, the end of it thrown over his left shoulder. In appearance he resembles the villain of the comic opera, but he comes forward only apologetic, ashamed of the trembling of his hands and the tottering of his steps. He has been hauling palm-leaves from the forest to repair a roof and has got soaked in the rain. Too strong a man to think it worth while to dry himself, he has sat down, taken his supper, and gone to sleep wet as he was. His little woman (*mujercita*) is temporarily at another plantation; if she had been with him she would have given him dry clothes. I feel his pulse. It is beating quickly and his skin is burning. His head and all his bones ache. "*Está bastante fuerte la calentura*, (the fever is pretty strong)," he says with a smile and a shake of the head. He gets a big dose of salts, and is told to go and lie down and to return to-morrow for a dose of quinine. I know he won't lie down; he will only sit about here and there in the shade; this is not his first *calentura*. To-morrow he will come up still weak and shaky, and will get twelve grains of quinine. Next day he will get ten grains, and in the afternoon will probably return to work. After that he will have a lessening dose every day for a week, at the end of which he will be as well as ever. But Alejandro is a *serrano*, a hillman, and an exceptionally strong one. Besides, as the other men say of him, "*tiene verguenza* (he has shame)." They mean that he has a conscience,

a sense of honour, too rare an endowment among Mexican workers.

Another fever patient is also a man from the mountains of the temperate region, who has got his illness by bathing in the river in the hot sun. The treatment for him is the same as for Alejandro, the regular treatment for fever, quinine preceded by an effectual cathartic. Ireneo has cut his foot with his hatchet. I wash it carefully, putting a drop of carbolic in the water, then apply arnica and close the wound with sticking-plaster. Ireneo winds on some bandage of his own over all, and hobble off to pass the day gossiping in the neighbourhood of the kitchen.

Joaquina comes with an ailing wailing baby. As I see no outward sign to account for the little creature's fretfulness, I infer a pain in its small stomach, and venture to administer a tiny dose of magnesia from my private stock. My proceeding is horribly empirical, but I dare not disappoint the poor mother by doing nothing at all for her baby; it were better to give it a tea-spoonful of warm water and sugar. The Faith Cure even at second hand is not altogether a delusion.

In a distant and more ambitious plantation they have a doctor, a graduate of Mexico, which is no mean city in respect of its Medical School. He has an imposing diploma, bearing the seal of the University and his photograph incorporated in the text, so that no impostor may steal and use it. But I am told they have a larger proportion of sick and a longer average term of cure than we who treat by rule of thumb and rely largely upon luck. A doctor when he is new is apt to be very popular here, like any other novelty. His mere presence among them calls people's attention to the state of their health, and, like the reading of a book of domestic

medicine, makes them imagine they have the symptoms of all sorts of illnesses. Besides there are motives for an Indian's actions, and the ways in which his ideas work, that are not to be interpreted by analogy with those of white people. He is capable of thinking that the doctor will be disappointed, and even offended, that perhaps he will go away, if patients do not turn up in plenty. He will come for treatment out of curiosity, to increase his knowledge, or out of avarice, fearful lest he may miss a share of anything valuable that may be going. And he will fish cunningly for a suggestion from the doctor's questions as to what kind of pain it may be well for him to have, and where it should be situated.

The sick disposed of, there is a gang of workers (time-expired men who have completed their contract) to be "liquidated," and this is the day for it; on a week-day it would interfere with business. The fourth commandment is read in Mexico, "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, and on the seventh shalt thou make up thy books." These men have come down from their mountain villages to work on the plantation for a fixed period, and then to return. They do not engage for a very long time, their own crofts needing their care. Their wages are not paid weekly or fortnightly, but at the end of their contract. They have however received a portion of their earnings in advance before leaving home, ostensibly for their slender outfit and the expenses of their families during their absence. Small detaining debts of some have had to be paid before they could set out. The headmen of their villages have taken care to secure from the employer their monthly capitation tax. The majority have asked for and expended on superfluous drinks and cigarettes a weekly trifle

of pocket-money. A few, looking to the end, have "scorned delights and lived laborious days." Others, unable to resist the seductions of the Store, have supplemented their rations with wheaten bread and white sugar, and their wardrobes with silk sashes and embroidered hats. These often find it hard to admit at liquidation, when they see their neighbours receiving much and themselves little, that they cannot eat their cake and have it. Each man has his separate debtor-and-creditor account in the plantation books and his pass-book to correspond. But many cannot read (though their wits are none the less keen in a bargain) and many speak only their Indian language. These have to be communicated with through their gang-leader, who knows enough Spanish for business purposes. Everything has to be explained at large and at length. Time is of no consequence and prompt despatch is suspicious. Thus the final adjustment of accounts to the mutual satisfaction of master and man often demands much temper and tact, and always demands unlimited patience.

But now the *faena* is over, work has ceased and all are free for the day. The store is thronged. Picturesque groups of men in big *sombreros* and clean white cotton shirts and trousers, and women in gay muslin skirts and long-fringed scarves stand or sit here and there. The crowd of spectators at the pay-table has had another fringe added to it. As we finish the last liquidation the house-boy comes to announce that the late breakfast (*almuerzo*) or early dinner, whichever one may choose to consider it, is ready, for it is eleven o'clock. The horn sounds to call the workers to their food. We arrange our papers, lock up the money-box, and sit down to table. Belén has cooked the meal. There is an excel-

lent soup made of black beans, lard and grated cheese ; but the chief glory of the meal is turkey, turkey chopped in pieces, stewed, and then smothered in a dark brown sauce. The dish is handed round and everybody helps himself to the part he likes best, if he can distinguish it. If he cannot it makes little difference, for the principal ingredient in the sauce is *chile*, and every piece tastes as if it were red hot. This sauce is a great favourite in Mexico and is called *mole*, a word which means *mild* ! The turkey is sometimes served whole, but in that case it is not trussed as we are used to see it, but lies pathetically on its side with its legs stretched half across the table. The house-boy, who also acts as housemaid, for he makes the beds and sweeps the rooms, and as butler, for he draws the corks, magnifies his office and distinguishes himself from the common servant by wearing a laundry shirt spotted with pink anchors, and tucking it in after the European fashion. He is also tightly belted with a scarf of purple silk. His feet are bare. He carries in the dishes from the kitchen, which is only separated from the dining-room by a row of sticks. Belén comes and leans against the doorpost, arms and feet crossed and cigar in mouth, to watch with her sharp black eyes the progress of each morsel. She asks how we like this and that. We profess delight and smack our lips. We dare not criticise Belén in public, not in Spanish at any rate, and even in English she almost seems to know by divination when a word is said about cookery. We are in her power, for cooks are scarce, and we might never manage to cajole another into banishment in the wilderness.

After breakfast the workers betake themselves to private business or diversion. Most white men embrace

the opportunity for a *siesta*. I have letters to write. But alas, on Sunday my Mexicans have some leisure too. Privacy has not yet been invented here, nor has it been discovered that anybody's time is of any value. I know an American who has built himself a little attic to his hut and retires into it when he desires to be alone, pulling the ladder up after him and letting his people clamour below for his attention in vain. He is thought to be disordered in his intellect. As yet I live as my neighbours do and am an easy prey to interruption.

I get to the length of "*Muy señor mio y amigo* (Dear sir and friend)," and am considering in what polite Spanish I can best couch a remonstrance to a dilatory merchant in Veracruz, when I have to stop to arrange a dispute between the cook and another lady. It is all about a broken *molinillo*. I do not know this at first. The cook begins by a respectful offer to resign her situation, which is too serious not to engage my immediate attention. I am inexperienced in the ways of women. The *molinillo* is a little turned wooden thing, partly pestle, partly whisk, with which a Mexican lady grinds and mixes the chocolate in her cup, whirling the instrument between the palms of her hands. There is, I fear, hard swearing on both sides. The thing has been lent. The borrower denies liability, setting up, as it seems, the defence made classical in the historic kettle case. The value of the utensil when new might be three half-pence. It seems little to make a fuss about between friends. I laugh, so do they. They care nothing for the *molinillo*, nothing whatever. They will go on with their work as I desire. For my part I see that what they really cared for was the importance of being

allowed to talk at length in the presence of the *Patrón*. They have had their wish and go away perfectly satisfied.

But meantime a little man with a jolly smiling face arrives, a parcel under his arm, his great felt silver-tasselled hat in his hand, and comes forward to salute me with all the elaborate forms of Spanish-Mexican politeness. For a moment I do not recognise him. He is the *sastre ambulante*, the travelling tailor. I had fallen in with him at another plantation and given him a few yards of white duck and a commission to make me a couple of pairs of trousers. He produces them. They prove, on being tried there and then, to be rather generously cut, so he pulls out his shears and his needle and thread, his little legs seem to cross themselves automatically, and he sinks contentedly down on the ground to make the needful alterations.

I turn again to my writing, but I have not got down three sentences when there is a tramp of horses' feet outside. Visitors have arrived. They are strangers, but we are far from the region of hotels, and hospitality to the passing traveller is a matter of course. We shake hands and mutually introduce ourselves. They are Mexicans, two up-river tobacco planters and a San Juan merchant on their way coastwards. A *copita* of Spanish brandy in lieu of a cocktail is served round, and water is brought that our guests may wash off the dust of their journey while the remains of our breakfast and some tinned meats are set out for them.

After they have eaten we light our cigars and seat ourselves in the porch. Writing must be postponed till night. The thermometer behind us in the shade marks 104°. Aurelio comes

up from the river and passes into the kitchen. Outside there is a small circle of idle people, and I know that every one of them will manage to bother me about something or other. I see among them an Indian who, as it is Sunday, has come in his canoe and has brought maize to sell. Another has a little present of fruit for me and of course a petition for a present in return,—a little medicine, or lime, or perhaps gunpowder. They are too polite to interrupt our conversation. All are perfectly good-natured. They can wait, till the evening, till to-morrow, till any time. Mexico is "el país de mañana (the country of to-morrow)."

As we sit idly smoking, now and then asking or answering a question that occurs, or brushing off a mosquito, Aurelio, behind us, rubbing up a glass, remarks in a casual way, just as if he were saying that the flies are troublesome, "A woman is drowned down there."

"Drowned!" I say, "when?"

He thinks for a moment. "About a quarter of an hour ago," he says, holding the glass up to the light and eyeing it critically before placing it on the table.

I start up. "Where is she?"

Aurelio comes forward and points to the little group forming a circlet on the gravel. "There on the bank, señor," he says. "You can see them standing round her."

With a word of apology to my visitors, who look at me with polite surprise, I pick up the brandy bottle and, calling to Aurelio to get the ammonia and follow me, I run quickly down.

There is a small circle of a dozen half-naked people crowding round something that lies on the ground. Fifty more are standing or sitting within as many yards, talking and laughing and quite indifferent to the

poor little tragedy that has just happened beside them. One of the nearest groups is listening to a young fellow who sits under a tree a little way up the bank playing a guitar and occasionally improvising a comic verse. The people make way for me, and those about the drowned woman stand back. I recognise her as one of the *molendras* (the women grinders at the mill), Petrona, a young unmarried girl. She lies on her back covered from breast to ankles with a piece of old sacking, her shawl folded and placed under her head. I ask what has been done, and two or three hasten to tell me. They have held down her head to let the water she had swallowed run out, but it was of no use; and now they have laid her down nicely. There is no more to be done; by-and-by her father will take her away. Her father is standing outside the little circle, his back towards it, and although he must hear every word he does not turn round. He is naked to the waist, and I can see that he has been in the water.

Making the people stand back, I kneel down and put the glass of my watch to the girl's lips. There is no sign of breath. I touch her hands and feet, and they are cold in spite of the blazing sun. I can feel no pulse at her wrist nor any beating of her heart.

I try to remember the directions (which we have all read at sometime somewhere) for resuscitating drowned persons, but meanwhile I do not delay to pour some brandy into her mouth, which I open with difficulty, and to hold the ammonia bottle to her nostrils. Then I set two men to slap the soles of her feet, and one to fan her face with his *sombrero*, while I and another move her arms from her sides up above her head and back again, so as to induce, so far as I

know how, artificial respiration. No doubt I should have wrapped her in warm blankets, but none were available, and besides they could hardly have been hotter than the sun, which beats on us so fiercely that I ought to have a sunstroke.

For a long time our labour appears to be ineffectual. The slappers and fanners have to be relieved by others. I feel as if I had worked an hour. The sun seems to be frying my spinal marrow as I stoop there on the burning gravel. But I think I remember that the directions are to persevere for two hours, and we persevere, for half-an-hour, maybe, or three quarters. I pour some more brandy into her mouth. This time we think we see, —we are not quite sure—the faintest possible movement in her throat, like a feeble attempt to swallow. This cheers us and we do not slacken our efforts.

At last we see unmistakable signs of life. Her breast moves slightly of itself. She breathes. I call her father, and as soon as there is no doubt of her recovery I leave her in his charge.

When I inquire how the thing happened, I learn that Francisca, another *molendera*, the wife of one of the workers, asked Petrona to bathe with her. Enjoying themselves and frisking about in the warm river, they suddenly slipped over a ledge into a hole which was beyond their depth. Francisca could swim a stroke or two, Petrona not at all, and they went down. Someone saw them sink and called to the young men who were bathing near. These came to the rescue and speedily pulled out Francisca none the worse, though badly frightened. Then they dived and brought up poor Petrona, who was carried ashore unconscious, and, after being treated ineffectually by the emptying process, was given over

for dead some time before my arrival on the scene.

I return to the house, passing on my way the gentleman with the guitar, who has never ceased playing all the time; indeed he continues his performance to an audience whose endurance is as remarkable as his own for the rest of the afternoon, only pausing for his supper, well into the night.

For my part, having completed the somewhat doubtful service to Petrona of bringing her back to a world where she is doomed to much toil and little gain, after she had probably got over the most painful part of the process of leaving it, I return to our guests. They take a calm and polite interest in hearing what has happened, and seem surprised, though too well-bred to say so, that I have taken so much trouble.

As we sit talking after supper, a long wail ascends from the people's

quarters. It ceases soon and quietness succeeds. I send, however, to inquire the cause, and the watchman comes up to tell me. It seems that an afterpiece has followed the drama—or melodrama, as it had a guitar accompaniment. Francisca's husband had spent the afternoon in the woods and did not return till long after all was over. Some busybody hastened to tell him what had happened. He was annoyed, and, taking a stick, he gave his wife a good thrashing. This over, there is quietness.

The long day closes, and at last I am able to return to my writing. I bless the Spaniards for having at least changed The Day of Rest from the fifth day to the seventh. Were the Republic of Mexico to follow the example of the first Republic of France and ordain a week of ten instead of seven days, I feel that I could sigh an acquiescence.

ANDREW MARSHALL.

## THE NEW VOLAPUK.

MY friend, Professor Burginson, the eminent philologist and critical author, first predicted the coming change. We had been discussing languages in general, and dialects in particular, in his charming study, three walls of which are faced with books representing every ascertained form of speech used on the planet, from that of the first anthropoid who discovered the wider latitudes of his tongue down to the latest echoes from the gutter. The remaining wall is devoted to choice etchings and paintings by modern masters.

"It is bound to come," he said, with the almost solemn emphasis which marks his more prophetic utterances. "The language of educated society, of books, magazines, and newspapers, has grown stale, outworn, and incapable of stirring our higher instincts and emotions. We complain of the dearth of genius; the real difficulty is with the medium in which genius has to work. English words are now polished to the smoothness of stones on the sea-shore by the mere attrition of daily use, and no longer cause our ears to tingle by the novelty of their impact. We want new thought-symbols, new vocal signs, in short,—a new language."

I fully agreed with him there. My want of success in the higher walks of literature I felt certain was due wholly to my having laboured in a tongue whose resources had been exhausted by the intellectual giants of the past. If my writings (poems, dramas, novels, and so on) had only appeared in Russian or Yiddish their bright originality would, I believed, have commanded

instant recognition. As it was, the critics had hinted other reasons for their failure.

"But," continued the Professor, ominously, as he refilled his pipe, "this virgin vocabulary, this new English Volapuk, to which I and other philologists look forward with the deepest yearning, and would hail with rapture, is likely to be preceded by an influx of dialect. We shall have, and here in London, a very deluge of the cruder primitive forms,—English, Scotch, and Irish provincialisms, degenerate forms from America and the Colonies, besides Continental-English, Indian-English, Chinese-English, and what not."

"A deluge which has already begun," I ventured to say, though with extreme diffidence, for my friend does not like comments, except in the way of unqualified agreement with his assertions.

"Just what I was going to point out," he said, with some testiness of manner; "and the fact that our leading novelists use dialect so largely is a conclusive proof of what I state. They have the sense to perceive its greater force and directness, its nearness to the vital passions and emotions. But it won't stop there, it will extend to all classes of society. Mark my words," he exclaimed, with an excitement that nearly shipwrecked his inkstand, "mark my words! In ten years' time all of us, parsons, lawyers, doctors, statesmen, artisans, and aristocrats, will be speaking a kind of dialectical compound, a rare hash of things at first, but the basis of a new and more effective language."

I was not entirely convinced of the sureness of his prophetic vision because of certain failures of his most sanguine predictions in the past. At this point, however, my story becomes almost wholly personal. My father, dissatisfied with the unproductive nature of my literary toils, secured me a post at Fort Boreas, one of the most northern stations of the Hudson's Bay Company. The engagement, it chanced, was exactly for the period allowed by the Professor for his surprising transformation in the speech of the British metropolis (and no doubt of the country as well); therefore, much as I should have liked to stay and watch its progress, I was compelled to exchange the fogs and festivities of the world's chief city for the icicles, Indians, and other local features of the most arctic expansion of the Empire.

The narrative of my sojourn under the Northern Lights is another story than this. It is, however, enough to say that I did not find the isolation so great as I feared, and was able, by a lavish expenditure in London newspapers, to follow the course of events at home, although as a rule about six months after they had taken place. There was something fascinating in thus spying upon Imperial affairs from the frost-nipped periphery of the political organism instead of from its heated centre, as I had formerly done. I beheld our great public functions, royal progresses, durbars, drawing-rooms, and so forth, in happier perspective, and could view the operation of such national experiments as the Education Bill and the photographic cure for ineptitude with calmer eye. But almost at once my attention was absorbed by the great linguistic change foreshadowed by the Professor. The papers began by noticing the remarkable growth of dialect in works of fiction, and then

commented on its steady increase with the public at large. This at first they hailed as a return to simpler modes of thought and expression; soon, however, less desirable tendencies were perceived. "The slow but continuous submersion of our (comparatively) academic English by a flood of semi-barbarous lingos, including the esoteric slang of the burglar and the gutter-snipe so faithfully reproduced for us by the conscientious realists of our day," said *THE LONDON THUNDERBOLT*, "cannot fail in time to bring about intellectual dry-rot. Short words and short wits have a natural affinity; and however appropriate the phrases of the Scottish kailyard and the Irish bog, the American nigger and the Anglicised Oriental, may be in the seductive fiction in which they are served up to us, they form a national peril when used in grave deliberative assemblies, and in the gatherings of polite and presumably educated persons."

I returned at the end of my term of exile, and was at once struck by the superficial changes in the country and people. An air of lightness and irresponsible pleasantry seemed to prevail everywhere. At the Liverpool landing-stage the very porters were hilarious, and the railway booking-clerk had the manner of a confirmed wag. The common language of the streets also seemed to have gained in colloquial vivacity since I left. On arriving at Euston I was met by my old friend and fellow author, Basil Mommsen, the poet and epigrammatist, whose face, however, wore a look of serious concern.

"Glad to see you back, old boy!" he exclaimed fervently as he grasped my hand. "But you're not an hour too soon if you want to help us in the great reform."

"What reform?" I asked vacantly.

"Haven't you heard?" he asked

in turn, with an expression of surprise.

"Not a word," I replied.

"Surely you know about the Anti-Dialect League?"

"Nothing whatever," I assured him.

It happened that I was still six months behind in my reading of the papers; also the Marconi apparatus on the steamer had broken down just after we left New York.

"Then I'd best tell you the whole story," he said, as we drove off in a cab, our Jehu chanting a topical ballad dating from the South African war. "The truth is," he went on, "that things have got to such a pass that radical measures have become imperative. Everybody has dialect on the brain, even people of light and leading. It's running through the town like measles or influenza; the judges and bishops, peers and commons, editors and critics have all caught it. I assure you it's used in West End drawing-rooms as the regular means of communication,—though, to be sure, slang always did come natural there. Well then, to avert national imbecility, the Anti-Dialect League has been formed by those of us who haven't bowed down to the popular idol. And not a moment too soon, as it has turned out, for the scientific chaps swear that atavistic symptoms are already cropping out,—people, you know, are getting to look and behave like our pre-human ancestors, monkeys, kangaroos, and so on."

"Rather serious, I confess," was my reply, though I really doubted the gravity of the case. For one thing Basil exaggerates notoriously; and as yet I had seen nothing more than the normal and long-admitted resemblance of my fellow-creatures to the animals in question. Probably I did not speak with sufficient conviction, for my friend was annoyed.

"Of course you're at liberty to doubt my word," he said in an aggrieved tone. "But if you'd like to take a turn with me to-morrow, after you've seen your people, you may be less incredulous."

My reception at the family abode in Kensington was affecting if somewhat conventional. It belongs, however, to that other story of which my sub-polar adventures form a part, and need not here be described. The same truth applies to my meeting with Maud Chevasse, whom I had left studying Greek at Newnham. She was now conducting an educational establishment at Wimbledon for training young ladies of the upper class in useful and innocent domestic amusements, including the study (in homeopathic doses) of standard English authors, wood-carving, and light dairy-work. That she had remained true to me, as well as to her own ideals, throughout my long banishment, touched me deeply.

My epigrammatic friend, still somewhat piqued at my indifference, came early next day. "Shall we try the Law Courts first?" he asked: and on my assenting we started in the direction of those solemn halls of judicature.

"I suppose all the learned pundits, the British Academy, and so forth, are strong supporters of the League?" I remarked as we walked along.

"Confound it, no!" he exclaimed with some heat. "I'm sorry to say that some of them, the philologists especially, are dead-set against it. Old Burginson, the President of the English Volapuk Society, you know, declares that the reign of dialect and slang will lead to a new language that will beat anything the world has yet seen. He's got it on the brain, and writes all his books in Anglo-Chinese."

On arriving at the Law Courts I

was struck, to say the least of it, with the cheerful tone of the procedure in all departments ; an improvement, I held, upon the old conditions, though no doubt some of the ancient dignity had departed. We sat down to watch an important divorce case, and here I at once perceived a radical change from the older forensic methods. My friend had explained that the presiding judge favoured what he sarcastically called the New Learning.

A young and spruce-looking barrister, in full gown and wig, was trying to discredit the evidence of the petitioner's chief witness, a rather pretty servant-girl who had sworn to the identity of a gentleman visiting at her mistress's house.

"Can't yer give us some sort 'er description of 'im ?" he asked, in a wheedling tone, and with a strong Cockney accent, perhaps put on for the occasion. "Wot was 'e loike, eh ? Tall or short ?"

"Tall," answered the girl giggling.

"And wot did 'e 'ave on,—leggin's, 'untin'-coat, and ridin' gloves ? Come now, my de-ab, don't pretend yer bashful !" and he chuckled her under the chin.

"Yes, 'e did," replied the servant, giggling again.

Here, however, the petitioner's leading counsel, an elderly barrister in silk, rose to his feet indignantly. "My lord," he exclaimed with excitement, "I protest against this flippant tone and behaviour on the part of counsel for the defence. I submit to your lordship that his language and actions are calculated to undermine the morals and hence the credibility of our witness, and thus to frustrate the ends of justice."

"Hoot, mon !" said the judge, a genial-looking Anglo-Saxon with his wig a little on one side, who seemed to have got up Scotch for his own amusement. "Gin the disteenguished

coonsel canna extract his eenformation wi'oot adopting the vernacular and chappin' the lassie's chin, he's at leeberthy to do so. And dinna fash yersel about the eends o' joostis,—that's my affair a'thegither."

Thus upheld by authority, the astute cross-examiner, after gaining from the witness a minute description of the alleged visitor, even to the colour of his eyes and hair, succeeded in obtaining her admission that it was always too dark in the passage for her to see anything.

"There, m' lud !" he exclaimed in triumph, "I've made it plain that the mysterious visitor, instead of being Sir William, as the petitioner's counsel suggest, was nothing but one of the girl's own followers. So the whole case comes a complete cropper, and I'm sure your ludship will instruct the jury to allow us costs."

In another court where dialectics were favoured, a particularly odious case of murder was being tried, and we arrived just in time to hear the judge pronounce sentence on the offender, a sinister-looking Oriental. His lordship, perhaps for this occasion only, employed a well-known idiom of the East.

"You droppee down so, allee-same," he explained, suspending an imaginary cord from his finger and thumb—"five footee, pop ! Then, never choppee off Inglistan's head for his money again no more."

His victim, I observed, grinned genially, no doubt with pleasure at hearing his sentence communicated to him in a familiar tongue.

In a few other courts where the old order prevailed the modern innovators were treated with scant courtesy by the judges, though not without indignant protests on their part. I could see, however, that dialect was in the air, and not to be extinguished without difficulty. Our further re-

searches led us to the business districts, to sundry large offices, among them the great banking institution in Threadneedle Street. Even in that grave national depository the clerks and cashiers seemed infected, and joked together in various lingual exotics once only to be found in novels by Distinguished Hands. In the restaurants and cafés, also, the habit seemed to have made considerable progress, to their no small enlivenment. Taken altogether, the results of our morning round struck me as more diverting than alarming, and so I told my friendly guide, to his infinite disgust.

"It's undermining the whole social fabric, insidiously but surely," he groaned. "Wait till you've seen more,—the Houses of Parliament, the theatres, the clubs, the churches, and the swell routs at the West End."

I was certainly impressed that evening, though at the same time amused, by the proceedings of Parliament as affected by the prevailing craze. Even in the Lords there were lively young peers who were jocular in strange forms of speech. "If the Hon'ble Lordship, who has just titillated our total midriff with his Demosthenes eloquence and gab," remarked a fair-haired young patrician who had been a Double-First at Oxford, "will only keep his ratiocinative faculties to the point, and his nose to the grindstone, he will not be the 'forgetful beggar,' as Poet Kipling says; and the cause of education will go forward with enhanced lubricity and long jumps." Another noble member announced, in the language of *THE BIGELOW PAPERS*, that he "stood on the Constitution, by thunder!" and wouldn't support the Bill under any circumstances. Passing to the more democratic assembly my opportunities for studying English as she is, or was then

spoke, were even better. Always a somewhat polyglot body, it seemed to have grown a Babel. I was told that the Speaker (whose polished and courtly manner was unchanged amid his noisier surroundings) had been compelled to read up the whole subject of dialect, and made it a point to keep several glossaries by his side. It is impossible for me to convey an idea of the chaos of brogues; I counted a round dozen, all well-defined and separate, like the smells of a famous German city. The excitement, I discovered, was due to that perennial irritant, the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill (or whatever its name may be in *Hansard*), which had completed one of its customary cycles and come up again for discussion. That party feeling ran high need not be said; and as of old the wilder radical elements were the measure's chief supporters. "Now is the time," cried one ebullient (and newly-elected) member, "to throw off for ever the tyranny of the Saxon over-lord and absentee, and rescue the widows and orphans from the heel of the oppressor;" but he was sharply checked by a colleague, who pointed out that the Bill was framed in the widowers' rather than the widows' interests. Another supporter asserted the futility of their efforts in a well-known sub-species of English. What was the use of their passing the Bill, he asked: "Bimeby comes along ol' Brew Bishop an' ol' Brers Duke and Marquess, in Upper Hen-Roost, an' stomp dey ol' foots on it befo' it done get time to be Law," a sally received with shouts of laughter and some hisses by the legislative host. Yet another member, perhaps by reason of his nationality, addressed them in Anglo-Teutonic. "If dose erodic zister-in-law lofers," he said, "would only zubbort a Pill for zuch marriages in ze life-dime off all bardies, as among our goot old vriends ze

Hebrew Badriarchs, ze Durks, and ze Mormons, it would safe dese violend beriodical gommotions ; but his arguments were cut short by a commotion of a physical kind which immediately demanded the presence of the Serjeant-at-Arms and a large body of police.

In the chief theatres we found popular opinion divided on the question of dialect, and novelties of jargon that were greeted with cheers in one house hissed in another. The same divergencies of view of course existed in the clubs ; the more academic, as might be expected, favoured the older use, but the militant ones, including of course those of the two popular Services, warmly espoused the less rigid forms of diction. The effect of the new movement on public worship I could hardly be expected to judge of until Sunday ; one night, however, we heard a congregation of an untrammelled religious body singing the refrain of a negro melody from the American South,

Get on board, po' sinner,  
Dey's room fo' many a mo' !

with an energy as new to me as it was surprising. It may be surmised that I looked forward with interest to meeting those upper ranks of society whose attitude towards new movements is by some imagined to be necessary to their success. At the few West End houses, however, which we visited on the second day (one proving insufficient for our purpose), the changes were less marked than in the more popular gatherings. Slang, as my friend had formerly reminded me, always came natural to these chartered barbarians ; and the only difference now was that they used dialect, which may be called its first cousin, rather more copiously. Everything by turns they are nothing

long, and I observed that a piquant form of Japo-Americanese was just then current with the younger generation.

At the end of our survey, as he called it, my friend again urged the claims of his society, the Anti-Dialect League. We were in the smoking-room of his elegant and exclusive club.

" You have now seen for yourself some of the ravages of the new folly," he said earnestly, " of this unlicensed gibberish to which those in authority weakly lend their support. You have witnessed its scandalous results in our halls of public procedure, especially that disgraceful affair in the House."

" Yes, my dear Basil," I assented, somewhat irritably ; " it's all very shocking, but at the same time it's rather amusing, and—"

" But," he cried, aghast at my continued indifference, " think of Shakespeare, Milton, Matthew Arnold, and our priceless inheritance of undefiled English ! What chance has real genius with these low jargons foisted upon us by irresponsible novelists, who as a fact mostly spin them out of their own brains and palm them off as studies in the speech of the people—genius, I say, which seeks the most refined and subtle medium for its true expression ? "

Then I seemed to perceive the real cause of all this woe. His own delicate productions, consisting mainly of detached moral aphorisms, such as " Virtue is the least picturesque of our vices," " We are sincere from the mere *ennui* of deceit," and " Benevolence is the last refuge of the spiteful" (to give the few examples I can recall), stood no chance against the modern popular flood. It appeared, therefore, that my own interests might clash with his. I ought to mention that, throughout

my long sub-arctic sojourn, I had been gathering materials for a psychological epic dealing with primitive passion and action (having made special studies of the local Indians, half-breeds, squaws, and papooses, with that end in view), and one reason for my return had been a desire to see whether the new language, Professor Burginson's vaunted Volapuk, would do for its composition; so I could hardly join the opposition League without further thought.

"I must consider the matter," I said, perhaps not quite ingenuously, for I meant to consult the Professor himself. Also I wanted to have another talk with Maud Chevasse.

The founder of the English Volapuk Society, for as such he is now best known, received me literally with open arms. He is a man of leonine presence, and a strong resemblance to the late Victor Hugo.

"It 'as come, ma fren'!" he cried rapturously, as I struggled from his embrace. "I told ye ten years agone that it would be upon us, an' now me prophecy 'as materialised in fact." He had, I observed, put his principles into practice, and spoke half-a-dozen dialects in the same breath. To be sure it might have been intended for a joke; my friend's jokes were always on the serious side.

"Yes, my dear Professor," I answered with a laugh, as I pulled down my necktie; "it's here with a vengeance."

"No longer," he went on, with the old familiar sweep of his right hand, which this time brought down a pen-rack, "no longer will the creative genius of the Race feel itself cramped by an outworn diction. Gadzooks, no! I guess this 'ere new English Volapuk will afford an unmatched medium for any number of future Chaucers, Spensers, and Shakespeare-

Bacons. Yes, Brer Jolliffe [my name if I have not given it before], w'en dis yer hash o' dialect done get hisself mixed up, 'e's gwine ter constitute the richest means of verbal expression ever known to man. How that will be nize, doan you thing?" he added, shooting off into Anglo-Japanese.

"Then the present Babel,—pardon me, dear Professor, this opulent mass of speech-elements," I said, "is not really the new language, but merely represents the ingredients, so to speak?"

"Ingrejents is good," he chuckled, I thought a little fatuously. "Yes, that's it; it's only the protoplasm, the basis of the mixture, and it won't be real Volapuk until it's had time to crystallise."

"And that may be long?" I ventured cautiously. It was clear that, if it took for ever to get into practical shape, it would hardly suit my purpose, human life being at best a span.

The Professor rose and paced the room with majestic strides. "Time is merely a relative measure," he said gravely, lapsing into the English of his earlier days, "and in a vast movement like this need not be considered. What are five hundred years, even a thousand, when the intellectual future of the planet is at stake? No: our duty is to lay the foundation, as our story-tellers are helping us, royally helping us, to do. Unwittingly, perhaps not always from disinterested motives (motives are usually mixed), such writers as [here he named half-a-dozen leading novelists of that day], who have brought the language of the slums and the Antipodes into our very drawing-rooms, have done the Cause more good than all the philologists living. You'll help us, of course, with your studies among the red-skins; everything counts. And you'll join the Society,—only five

name,  
w'en  
hisself  
stitute  
ession  
t will  
added,  
.

ardon  
mass  
s not  
merely  
o to

ckled,  
Yes,  
lasm,  
won't  
time

ven-  
that,  
prac-  
t my  
est a

l the  
Time  
said  
h of  
nove-  
ered.  
en a  
ture  
our  
; our  
ually  
ested  
(xed),  
half-  
that  
usage  
into  
done  
the  
s, of  
the  
And  
five

guineas?" and he pushed a blank form and an inkstand towards me.

"I must think it over," I said, feeling like a double-faced impostor.

Then I went to see Maud.

She had just finished her butter-making lesson (the class included a duchess, a baroness, and the daughter of an American millionaire), and came out to meet me with shining eyes,—they are fine eyes, of a softly-shadowed blue, like the sea in some of its more dreamy moods. I told her all about my Iliad of the ice-bound North, and the painful dilemma I was in, for both the Professor and Basil were my old friends. She was thoughtful for a moment; then,

"Dear Peveril," said she, "don't join either Society; they're both, I think, rather silly. And why not

write your epic in English? People are getting bored with dialect; it takes such a time to understand and gives them the headache. But I do not really believe the language matters; people want new thoughts and feelings; they want to have new things happen, or else the old things happen in a new way. And I believe they would like to be made happy. I wish authors knew more about life, and love, and sunshine, and flowers, and little children, and the art of absurd and entire joyfulness. Then again, do please write it in prose,—I believe there are prose epics—or nobody in the world will ever read it."

And I wisely did so.

PEVERIL JOLLIFFE.

## A FORGOTTEN JESTER.

THE new edition of MRS. CAUDLE'S CURTAIN LECTURES, which has just been published by way of celebrating the centenary of its author's birth, invites us to a reconsideration of the life and work of a man who among his contemporaries enjoyed a reputation which posterity does not seem to have endorsed. If an enquiring stranger in London, at any time between 1827 and 1857, should have happened to ask who was then reputed to be the wittiest man in England, nine out of every ten who pretended to any familiarity with the literary society of the metropolis would have pointed out a dapper little fellow, standing scarcely more than five feet high, whose short, but by no means thin or fragile-looking, body was surmounted by a big head, a face furnished with a prominent aquiline nose, a pair of quick-glancing blue eyes overhung by bushy eyebrows, and a mass of long hair flung carelessly back from a smooth, high forehead, which altogether gave him something of a leonine appearance. If our enquiring stranger had gone on to ask what were the most characteristic performances of this lion-headed little man, it would at once have become apparent that Douglas Jerrold's fame as a convivial wit had already threatened to eclipse his reputation as a writer. His sharp sayings, carelessly flung at high and low (says his son), so circulated about London that "hundreds of men who had never read a line he had written knew his name as connected with some flash of wit, some happy epithet, some biting jest." His

power of repartee was extraordinarily spontaneous. But the abundant wit was too often of a somewhat acrid flavour; and as, of course, it was always the biting jest which was best remembered and travelled farthest, the wittiest man in London was currently reported to be also something of a brute. His friend Charles Mackay said that, "when his jest came to the tip of his tongue, it had to explode, though the heavens should crack, or his best friend take it amiss." And it is something of a testimony to the existence of certain other sterling qualities which his friends were forced to recognise in Jerrold's character, that they did not more often take amiss the pointed shafts which he was perpetually aiming at all around him.

Mrs. Cowden Clarke, indeed, tells us that he had a way of looking at you, when he dealt a repartee, which so plainly showed his own sense of the fun of the thing, and so evidently called for a similar appreciation on the part of the victim, that the joke was deprived of all personality or ill-nature. His reported jests do not altogether give that impression. "We row in the same boat, you know," said a certain humorous writer pleasantly to him, by way of enlisting his sympathy in some literary project. "Yes," was the prompt and conciliatory reply, "we row in the same boat,—but with very different skulls!" Another acquaintance (according to one version of the story, it was Thackeray), walked up to him one day at the club and said, "Why, Jerrold, I am told you said —— was

the worst book I ever wrote." "I said no such thing," was the instant retort; "I said it was the worst book *anybody* ever wrote." How Thackeray (if Thackeray it was) took the fun of this is not on record; but we happen to know that another friend was mortally aggrieved by a similar kind of witticism. John Abraham Heraud, author of certain philosophical works, and of two ambitious poems, entitled *THE DESCENT INTO HELL* and *THE JUDGMENT OF THE FLOOD*, wished to get Jerrold, who was then on the staff of *THE ATHENÆUM*, to give him a favourable notice. One day, when they happened to meet, Heraud tentatively said, "Jerrold, have you seen my *DESCENT INTO HELL*?" "No," came the somewhat obvious answer, "but I wish to Heaven I had!" John Forster, the friend and biographer of Dickens, was also a life-long friend of Jerrold's; but we imagine his friendship with the latter must have been frequently strained almost to snapping-point. Sir Joseph Crowe, in his *REMINISCENCES*, gives us a specimen of the manner in which Jerrold was in the habit of baiting Forster. During the preparations for the performance of *EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR* by the amateur company of which both Jerrold and Forster were members, the former picked up a scene-painter's pencil (a thick, wooden thing, worn down by repeated cutting), and, looking at this in his arch way, exclaimed, "Hallo, here is the exact counterpart of John Forster, short, thick, and full of lead!" Forster became crimson with rage, and jerked out at Douglas,—"Mr. Jerrold, sir, a joke is a joke, but this is really going too far." The joker, however, was quite capable of going much farther. When some friends were talking of Forster, and one of them suggested that he was to Dickens

what Boswell was to Johnson, Jerrold agreed; "But with this difference," said he, "that he does not do the Boz well." This was not necessarily unfriendly. But when, some time after, he went up to the modern Boswell at his club, and said, "Well, Forster, they tell me Dickens pays the dog-tax for you," it must be admitted that none but the most good-natured of friends would ever have forgiven the insult. And Jerrold must have been perfectly conscious that some of his sharp sayings had given dire and lasting offence, even when he had only intended a little harmless pleasantry; for, on his death-bed, referring to his associates on *PUNCH*, he said, "Tell the boys that if I've ever wounded any of them, I've always loved them." Those to whom Jerrold is only known by his reputation as a wit, may possibly think, after the specimens here quoted, that such a reputation may be cheaply gained by unlimited insolence and a total disregard for the feelings of other people. But a glance over some of the other specimens of his wit to be found in the eight volumes of his collected works, and a perusal of the biography written by his eldest son, will tend to produce a very different impression of the man.

Douglas Jerrold was born in London on January 3rd, 1803. His parents were strolling players; the mother being a young, energetic, capable woman, and the father a good and amiable, but weak and unpractical man, who was older than his own mother-in-law. In 1807 Mr. Jerrold and his family moved to Sheerness, where he had taken the lease of a small theatre, and where, for some seven or eight years, he lived in comparative prosperity on the fruits of the nautical dramas which his little stage presented for the delectation of the blue-jackets, who at that time

were always to be found at Sheerness in crowds. With such surroundings as these, the boy not unnaturally wanted to be a sailor; and at the absurdly early age of eleven he was duly rigged out as a middy, and placed on board the guard-ship NAMUR, then stationed at the Nore. But he saw little service, and what he did see he did not like. In April 1815 he was transferred to the gun-boat ERNEST, which was commissioned to convey transports to Ostend, on the eve of the battle of Waterloo. Later in the year, the ERNEST brought home a cargo of wounded men from the fight; and in October of the same year, on the conclusion of peace, the ship's company was paid off, and Midshipman Jerrold quitted the service for ever. His short experience of it, however, left two impressions on his mind which were ineffaceable. He saw the British sailor flogged with cat-o-nine-tails,—a sight which he declared made him sick whenever it was recalled to his memory; and the ERNEST's ghastly cargo of wounded soldiers, with their raw stumps and festering wounds, disgusted him for the remainder of his life with the very idea of war. The peace, however, spelt ruin to the little theatre at Sheerness; and in 1816 the Jerrolds moved back to London, and settled themselves in Broad Court, Bow Street. The father and mother got an occasional engagement on the boards of the London theatres, and the boy was apprenticed to a printer.

In after life he would tell his young friends for their encouragement that, as a friendless boy in London, he had stamped his foot on the pavement and vowed that he would become somebody. He used to rise with the first peep of day to study his Latin and French grammars before going to work. Shakespeare was read through

and through during the winter evenings; and by judicious pinching his scanty wages enabled him now and again to get from the circulating library a coveted volume of Walter Scott. In talking with the youthful literary aspirants whom he liked to gather round him after he had become a well-known author, he would often refer to these early struggles. No man, he would tell them, ever achieved greatness who had not, for some years of his young life, risen at six o'clock every morning. And the youth of the day did not, in his opinion, read either the Bible or Shakespeare thoroughly enough. In his early days, he boasted, nobody had ever quoted a line of Shakespeare to which he could not instantly add the next line. "Plain living and high thinking, my boys, that's the maxim," was his constant advice. And the spirit to carry a young fellow successfully through life was that which Henry Brougham showed when, mounting the Edinburgh coach for his first journey to London, he exclaimed,—"Here goes for Lord Chancellor!"

In 1819, when Jerrold was sixteen years of age, he was working as a compositor for the printer of *THE SUNDAY MONITOR*. Having been to see *DER FREISCHUTZ* one evening, he wrote a criticism of the performance, and dropped it into his employer's letter-box. Next morning he was delighted to receive, not only his own manuscript to set up, but also an editorial note, addressed to the anonymous correspondent, requesting further contributions. He very soon received the appointment, such as it was, of dramatic critic to the paper; and at the same time he busied himself in writing verses and other trifles for several of the magazines. In 1821 his first play was acted at Sadler's Wells theatre. It had been

written three years previously, when he was only in his fifteenth year; and for the first production of a mere lad, it had a highly curious history. He had at first called it **THE DUELLISTS**; but before its representation this bald title was changed to **MORE FRIGHTENED THAN HURT**. After being performed at Sadler's Wells, it fell into the hands of a French adapter, who translated it, and secured its representation in Paris. Some years later an English adapter, unaware of its origin, re-translated the French version into English, and it was played at the Olympic, in London, with the title of **FIGHTING BY PROXY**.

At the mature age of twenty-one Jerrold married; and in the following year, feeling that the responsibilities of married life necessitated a more settled income, he engaged with Davidge of the Coburg Theatre, to write all the dramas, farces, and dramatic squibs, which that penurious manager might require, in consideration of a small, fixed, weekly salary. Four years he thus served Davidge, who proved to be a hard and ruthless taskmaster, until in 1829, after a furious quarrel, manager and author parted in anger. Fortunately for Jerrold, he had just completed a nautical drama entitled **BLACK EYE'D SUSAN, OR ALL IN THE DOWNS**. With the manuscript of this play under his arm, the indignant little author went straight off to Elliston, of the Surrey theatre, and was at once engaged as dramatic writer to that establishment, at a salary of five pounds a week. **BLACK EYE'D SUSAN** proved triumphantly successful. It ran for over three hundred nights at the Surrey; it was borrowed by Covent Garden; actors and managers, all over the country, reaped a golden harvest from it; it established Jerrold's reputation as a

dramatist; and it brought him in hard cash the sum of — seventy pounds!

This success naturally acted as a spur to Jerrold's energies, and the play-writing went merrily on. In 1830 he was successful again with **THE DEVIL'S DUCAT** at the Adelphi; and in the following year was gratified by the reception of one of his pieces at Drury Lane. In 1832 appeared **THE RENT DAY**, a play suggested by, and the scenery taken from, Sir David Wilkie's two great pictures; and the author learned that when Wilkie went to see the performance at Drury Lane, he cried over it like a baby. These successes were rapidly followed up by several plays produced during 1833 and 1834 at Covent Garden and the Haymarket. In 1835, besides writing a considerable number of stories, essays, and sketches for the newspapers and magazines, he produced four plays for the principal London theatres, only one of which turned out a failure. In 1836 he was tempted into a theatrical venture of his own. But the Strand Theatre, as managed by him and his brother-in-law, W. J. Hammond, turned out a bad speculation; and Jerrold for some years forsook the drama, and turned his attentions to other matters. During 1837 and 1838 he contributed a number of short stories and sketches to **THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE**, many of which were subsequently included in the three volumes entitled **MEN OF CHARACTER**, which, with illustrations by Thackeray, were published in 1838. In 1840 he edited **HEADS OF THE PEOPLE**, to which he was also a voluminous contributor, and in 1841 **PUNCH** came into being, to which he contributed regularly and copiously, from its second number to the week of his death. In 1842 he pleased the theatre-goers with **BUBBLES OF THE DAY** at the Haymarket; and in 1845,

he still better pleased them with *TIME WORKS WONDERS*, a play which drew full houses for ninety nights. Several plays followed, and it was not until after the failure of *A HEART OF GOLD* in 1854 that he ceased to write for the stage altogether. In the meantime his unflagging energy had been devoted to a number of other literary matters. In 1843 *THE ILLUMINATED MAGAZINE* was founded by Mr. Herbert Ingram, of *THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS*, under Jerrold's editorship; and to this he contributed, month by month, the book upon which he always most prided himself, *THE CHRONICLES OF CLOVERNOOK*. The magazine, however, was but a short-lived affair, and in two years the editor was free to venture on one of his own, called *DOUGLAS JERROLD'S SHILLING MAGAZINE*, for which he wrote *ST. GILES'S* and *ST. JAMES'S*, a characteristic story, no less characteristically illustrated by John Leech. In the summer of 1846 appeared the first number of *DOUGLAS JERROLD'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER*, a Radical Sunday journal, which at first bid fair to become a good property; but in a very short time both magazine and newspaper belied their promise, and were allowed to die. These were Jerrold's last literary ventures on his own account. In 1852 he became editor of *LLOYD'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER*, at a salary of £1,000 a year. Under his conduct, the paper rose in circulation by thousands; and he continued to edit it up to the last week of his life. He died June 8th, 1857, at the age of fifty-four.

As a record of strenuous and incessant literary production, with scarce a break for a period of thirty-five years, the foregoing record would be hard to beat. In fact, it was too strenuous, too incessant, and, moreover, it began too prematurely for the

work to be all on his highest possible level. He once said to an ardent young literary enthusiast, who was burning to see himself in print: "Be advised by me, young man; don't take down the shutters before there is something in the shop to sell." But he did not reck his own rede. He was only nineteen when he began definitely to write for his living; and from that date to the end of his career the ink continued to flow ceaselessly from his pen. His mind was never allowed to lie fallow for a time, or given any opportunity for that quiet brooding which is a necessary preliminary to the production of the higher kinds of art. Hence it is that, neither in his dramas nor in his stories, do we find any rounded and complete character. His *dramatis personae* are seldom even portraits of individual oddities: they are merely the author's puppets; and although he pulls the strings cleverly enough, and at the same time keeps up a perpetual fusillade of brilliant remarks, it is too obvious that the actors are only so many marionettes.

The vehicle which best suited Jerrold's peculiar faculty was *PUNCH*. The cap and bells of the jester fitted his talents to a nicety; none the less that, as with many of the professional jesters of old time, a good deal of his fooling was meant in deadly earnest. He was essentially a moralist and satirist, and every one of his stories is as obviously contrived to point a moral as are the fables of *Aesop*. Of course he was a party man, and he had the good sense never to pretend to be anything else. He was an ardent advocate of popular education, of prison reform, of the abolition of capital punishment; and he was the declared enemy, among other things, of aristocratic distinctions, of ecclesiastical abuses, and of our military system. Controversy

on subjects of this kind is in its very nature ephemeral, and the light shafts of ridicule which Jerrold shot week by week in the columns of *PUNCH*, at whatever he thought to be a sham or an injustice, effective as they may have been for party purposes at the time, are scarcely more worthy of permanent preservation than the leading articles in his newspaper. His wit had, and was always meant to have, a sting in it; but it is only those who happen to be in accord with the author's social and political opinions who will much appreciate the keen thrust of his satire. A fair specimen perhaps, is his advocacy of the removal of the bishops from the House of Lords, "in order that they may wholly devote themselves to the House of the Lord"; and another is the ironical manner in which he took up his parable in *PUNCH* when a certain prominent Doctor of Divinity announced that what the masses of this country wanted was not cheap bread and free education, but to be made each and all professing Christians. Jerrold, in answer to this, drew a picture of what he conceived would happen if, for one day, everybody in London practised pure Christianity. Of course, he began with the bishops. The Right Reverend fathers, we are told, met at Lambeth Palace, and then :

Discovering that locusts and wild honey—the Baptist's diet—may be purchased for something less than ten thousand a year,—and after a minute investigation of the Testament, failing to discover the name of St. Peter's coach-maker, or of St. Paul's footman, his valet, or his cook, take counsel with one another, and resolve to forego at least nine tenths of their yearly incomings.

The snobbishness of some newspaper paragraph happens to raise his bile, and he asks sarcastically why decent ladies and gentlemen require

to be praised simply for not going on all fours.

A Duke runs into a farmhouse from a pelting shower; warming his toes at the hearth,—he—yes—he "talks familiarly" with his rural host! At this the historian flourishes a pen in a convulsion of delight. Was ever such condescension, such startling affability? Of course it was expected that the distinguished visitor would command the baby at the breast to be carefully washed, and straightway served up to him in cutlets.

But the great, ultra-virtuous, and much belauded middle class is not allowed to get off scot free. He finds that there is snobbishness in trade also: "Wholesales don't mix with retails; raw wool doesn't speak to half-penny ball of worsted; tallow in the cask looks down upon sixes to the pound; and pig-iron turns up its nose at tenpenny nails." Character, too, he finds to be regarded too much in the light of a valuable commercial asset, like money: "When you've a good deal, you may risk some; for if you lose it, folks still believe you have plenty to spare." This kind of thing he poured out unceasingly for something like a quarter of a century; but with mere comic writing, and buffoonery for its own sake, he had no sympathy. Even *PUNCH* was sometimes too flippant for him, and we find him writing to Charles Dickens in 1846 to express his hope that the world will soon get tired of this eternal guffaw at all things, which was at that time (would that it were not now!) so rampant.

After all, life has something serious in it. It cannot be all a comic history of humanity. Some men would, I believe, write the comic sermon on the Mount. Think of a Comic History of England; the drollery of Alfred; the fun of Sir Thomas More in the Tower; the farce of his daughter begging his dead head, and clasping it in her coffin on her bosom. Surely the world will be sick of this blasphemy.

Notwithstanding the touch of bitterness which is apparent in many of Jerrold's writings,—a bitterness due, no doubt, to the poverty, hardship, and squalid surroundings of his early days, it was a faulty criticism which judged the author to be a cynical misanthrope. Hepworth Dixon declared, in an obituary notice of his friend in *THE ATHENÆUM*, that if every one who had received a kindness from Douglas Jerrold would fling a rose on his grave, the spot would be marked by a mountain of flowers. And it is not only from the naturally partial biography by his son Blanchard, but from various independent sources, that we get a picture of him as a hearty, jovial, frank, impulsive, and even recklessly generous man. He was more than once himself in financial difficulties through unwisely helping others. The last time he ever used his cheque-book was to oblige a needy friend; and the last letter he ever opened was one from another friend who desired to postpone the repayment of a loan. Thomas Cooper relates that, after hawking his *PURGATORY OF SUICIDES* all over London in 1845, in the vain attempt to find a publisher for it, he at length managed to get a letter of introduction to Jerrold. This he shyly left, together with the manuscript of his poem, at the latter's house at Putney; and when he called a day or two later for an answer, he was surprised at the cordiality of his reception. "Glad to see you, my boy," cried the hearty little man, warmly grasping the other's hand; "your poetry is noble—it's manly; I'll find you a publisher, never fear it. Sit you down, and" ringing the bell as he spoke, "what will you take?" Cooper thought if all misanthropes were like this, he would like to make the acquaintance of a few more of them. And Jerrold's promises were

not made to be broken. He persuaded his own publisher to bring out Cooper's poem, at once accepted a story from him for *THE SHILLING MAGAZINE*, and soon afterwards sent him to the provinces as special correspondent for the weekly newspaper. A story told by the coachmaker who built a brougham for him, when at length Jerrold was able to afford himself that luxury, may be quoted in this connection. After admiring the bright polish of his new carriage, Jerrold happened to say that the street urchins would soon cover it with scratches. Whereupon, the coachmaker at once proposed to put a row of spikes at the back. "By no means, man," exclaimed Jerrold, turning sharply and almost fiercely upon him; "and know that to me a thousand scratches on my carriage would be more welcome than one on the hand of a footsore lad, to whom a stolen lift might be a godsend." In fact, the cynic of popular report turns out, on nearer view, to be a pronounced sentimentalist.

Jerrold not only made a brave struggle with poverty in his younger days, but in after life an equally brave struggle with illness and bodily pain. He suffered much from rheumatism in various forms, and frequently wrote or dictated humorous articles while writhing in agony. He once worked for six months in a darkened room, while suffering from an acute inflammation, which he described as something like toothache in the eye. He composed witty sketches for *PUNCH* while lying motionless, undergoing the water-cure at Malvern; and some of his *CHRONICLES OF CLOVERNOOK* were produced at a time when he had to be carried about in an armchair at Herne Bay. In Dr. Wigan's book on *THE DUALITY OF THE MIND* we find an anecdote of him given to illustrate the control of the mind

over the body. While desperately ill, Jerrold was, as he said, in the position of having to feed a family out of an inkstand; and after some hesitation he ventured to ask his medical attendant what hope there was of his speedy recovery. The doctor evaded the question as long as possible, but at last was compelled to admit that he believed there was no hope at all. "What," exclaimed the sick man, "die and leave my wife and five helpless children? By God! I won't die." And he got better from that hour. Charles Dickens bears eloquent testimony to his gentle, affectionate nature, regard for friends, and fondness for children; and tells a pleasant story of his reconciliation with him after an estrangement.

A good many months had passed without my even seeing him in the street, when it fell out that we dined, each with his own separate party, in the Strangers' Room of a club. Our chairs were almost back to back, and I took mine after he was seated and at dinner. I said not a word (I am sorry to remember) and did not look that way. Before we had sat so long, he openly wheeled his chair round, stretched out both his hands in a most engaging manner, and said aloud, with a bright and loving face that I can see as I write to you, "For God's sake, let us be friends again! A life's not long enough for this!"

The glimpses we get of Jerrold at home and among his friends almost all exhibit him in an amiable light. His son describes an afternoon in the garden of West Lodge, Putney, when grave editors and contributors, after basting one another with knotted handkerchiefs, wound up the afternoon's play by romping and turning heels overhead among the haystacks in the orchard. And on another occasion, after a dinner-party in the

garden tent, all the guests, including Dickens, MacLise, Macready, and John Forster, indulged in a most hilarious game at leap-frog. Jerrold could never learn to play any game requiring manual skill, nor to dance, nor to ride a horse, any more than he could carve a joint, draw a straight line, or even draw a cork. But he was fond of music, and could sing a capital song on occasion; and his free, boyish spirit, and loud, clear laugh were remarkable to the end of his life. He disliked noisy London, and loved to live on the very edge of the suburbs, where he could always "see a bit of green," and go about in a jacket and straw hat. At home he always adhered to what he called simple country fare; and even in clubs he disliked elaborate dinners, liveried servants, and other conventional luxuries; and he never sought to get himself into what is called Society. But he was one of the most clubbable of men; and the Mulberries, the Museum, the Hooks and Eyes, Our Club, and other such long vanished institutions always looked to Jerrold to lead the fun. Unfortunately the most brilliant of after-dinner talk has usually no more sparkle in it when served up to a succeeding generation than have the leavings of last night's soda-water bottles. A writer's fame must rest upon his writings; and it cannot be contended that Jerrold was one of the great artists. But the four closely-printed volumes into which the best of his work has been compressed form a very storehouse of quaint conceit and burnished epigram. Much of it is too pyrotechnical for steady and continuous reading, but all of it is good to dip into now and again, both for pleasure and for profit.

JOHN FYVIE.

## THE ABYSSINIAN ARMY.

GREAT BRITAIN and Abyssinia are acting in concert against the forces of the Mullah. Although to many people this arrangement may seem to be merely the outcome of the Somali rebellions, there really exists a traditional alliance between the two nations. Some twenty years ago the Negus John lent us his assistance against the invading hordes of the Mahdi,—a fact of which his son did not forget to remind Queen Victoria in 1896 when he found himself at handgrips with the Italians. This first alliance, however, was merely a temporary measure, arranged for the release of the Egyptian garrisons of Gherar, Gallabat, Kassala, and other towns. The present agreement has in reality a far wider significance, for it implies an acknowledgment of Abyssinia as one of the civilising powers in eastern Africa. Such being the case Englishmen may perhaps care to read a short account of the Abyssinian army and its former exploits, of which military men in other countries have made studies more or less exhaustive.

Perhaps the most striking instance of the difficulties which Menelik has been compelled to meet and overcome in his march towards civilisation, is one that occurred in the course of the thirteen months (1896-97) during which many hundreds of Italians were retained as prisoners-of-war in Shoa after their crushing defeat at Adowa. It is related that one day the Negus sent to a certain officer of artillery, named Lieutenant Caruso, and ordered him to instruct the Shoans in strapping guns on to their

mules. The lieutenant, regardless of consequences, sent a decisive refusal, adding that even if the Italian general, who was also a prisoner, had ordered him to do this he would have declined. Menelik, irritated at such an answer, returned him a message to the effect that at Adowa there were no generals, but that he, the Negus, was in command of everyone, and that it would therefore be best not to incur his anger. To which Caruso replied: "Tell your emperor that he can have me shot, or mutilated by the loss of one hand and one foot [the sentence which was actually carried out on the native soldiers in Italian service], but he will not succeed in getting from me what he asks."

This bold refusal speaks well for the lieutenant; but it also leads us to a noticeable point, namely that in spite of the French and Russian instructors whom he is said to have employed, Menelik, even at the end of his struggle with Italy, did not fully understand the use of his own guns. And indeed this is no isolated instance. Similar demands were noticed after each Italian defeat. And it is recorded that all through the gallant defence of Macalle the Italian gunners had the upper hand, although their pieces were outranged by those of Menelik; while even during those last terrible hours at the end of the battle of Adowa General Dabormida's artillery was more than a match for that of the Shoans.

Nor were the other Abyssinian corps in any better plight; indeed their condition was hardly so good. One would not, of course, expect from

Ethiopians any great feats of military science, of fortification or of engineering; but one would have supposed, in view of their constant state of warfare during the last four centuries, that they would at least have acquired by painful experience some skill in binding up cuts, in bone-setting, and in the rougher methods of succouring the wounded. On this point we may refer for instruction to a story told by Major Gamerra who commanded the 8th Native Infantry at Adowa where his battalion, after a splendid bayonet-charge into the centre of the enemy, was surrounded and almost annihilated, he himself being then made prisoner. It was on the very first morning of his captivity, when he had awakened, as one may imagine, filled with the most bitter reflections, that suddenly the *basha* (officer) whose prisoner he was, came up and beckoned to him in a friendly manner. The narrative then runs as follows :

He led me [says the Major] into a tent in which there lay a wounded man and told me to doctor him. I tried to refuse, but soon saw that it was no moment for showing obstinacy. I washed, with muddy water, the wound that the man had in his shoulder, put a plug of cotton over it and bound it up to the best of my ability with a blood-stained bandage that made me shudder with disgust when I touched it. I thought then that I had finished and asked leave to wash my hands, but the basha had no such idea; he took me to another tent where I set (God alone knows how!) a fractured arm, and then we went from tent to tent. I extracted bullets, and bound up broken heads, until at last this torture came to an end. I had just extracted with great ease a fragment of shrapnel from a surface wound of a poor lad already dying of other very serious injuries, when they brought me an old man who had received (Heaven knows how long before!) a bullet in his right thigh. The hole through which it had gone in could hardly be seen, nor could one locate the bullet by touch. If I had felt in a condition to

do so I would have laughed aloud, but indeed it was no occasion for laughing. I made them understand that without surgical instruments I could not extract that bullet, whereupon they gave me a large blunt knife without a point and ordered me to operate. It was more than one could stand! I refused with considerable energy, and although they told me that, in spite of my not being a doctor I had nevertheless done better than any Amhara, I went out of the tent.

From these two anecdotes it might be imagined that there is no organisation whatsoever in the Ethiopian army, but this would not be quite true. It has probably as much and as little cohesion as a feudal host of the Middle Ages,—for this is what it seems in reality to be. Owing to loss of contact with Europe and to the arresting of all progress by three centuries of civil and Mahomedan wars, Ethiopia has never advanced beyond the feudal stage.

I speak in this essay of what is distinctly Abyssinian, and not of any improvements and alterations that Menelik has introduced during the course of the last three or four years. It is certain, for instance, that by now his men understand artillery, and that they are armed with weapons of the latest model. But things move rapidly in these days; it would be impossible for anyone to give an accurate account of all such changes, unless he had been living at Addis Ababa up to a few months ago and had made a point of observing each order as it came out. And even then it does not follow that all the Negus's schemes are made known to the general public. He is a man of very unusual ability, far in advance of nearly all his subjects. He understands civilisation. His table is covered with newspapers from all European nations, which he either reads or has translated to him. But

above all things he knows how to work quietly; his campaign against Italy was a masterpiece of mystification.

The national organisation of the Abyssinian army, that which defeated the Italians in 1896 and Ras Mangasha in 1898, may be shortly described as follows. At the head of all is the Negus Nagasti, the King of Kings. This title does not imply that he is usurping a description usually reserved for the Deity, but merely that there are several Neguses or Kings in Abyssinia. He is their feudal chief; King of the Kings of Ethiopia is his true title. Below the Negus come the Rases, or generals, usually governors of a province. Below the Rases are the commanders of the four great divisions, the Dedjazmatch (who commands the rear-guard), the Cagnasmatch (right wing), the Guerasmatch (left wing), and the Fitaurari (advanced guard). These are the highest grades; below them rank the Balambaras (commandant of a fortress), the Basha, &c. But matters are much complicated by the irregularity of the organisation. Young men of noble birth are often in command of a body of soldiers more numerous than those led by officers of considerable standing. Or, again, each ruler of a great province has an army similar to that of the Negus Nagasti, with dedjazmatches, &c., &c., under his command, whose titles are indistinguishable from those of men appointed by the Negus himself. But as a rule the officers are well chosen, because the lives of the rulers depend on their efficiency.

As regards the men, they may very roughly be divided into three classes. Firstly, there are the sons, clients, and household of the chiefs who are bound to follow them in time of war; secondly, a large number of young men who become regular soldiers. A

soldier in Abyssinia has the right when on the march of requisitioning food from the peasants, and if victorious is allowed a liberal share of loot; in time of peace his chief will often quarter him on a village, and he also receives a few thalers as pay. It is therefore one of the most agreeable professions for a young man who dislikes work; and, indeed, the idleness and immense numbers of the military class have been one of the curses of Abyssinia.

But the true strength of the organisation lies in the third means of recruiting, namely the general obligation that lies on every man to take service in time of danger. It corresponds to the ancient Fyrd of England, and has been frequently resorted to even during the last twenty years. We thus find an army that bears a considerable resemblance to our own in the time of Edward the First,—the more so as the great military leaders become governors of provinces in time of peace. Military service and the possession of land are closely allied in Abyssinia, as they once were in England. One might even in the sheriff of the Middle Ages find some slight likeness to the Abyssinian Shum, who is a civil and military official. He is responsible for the administration of the province, town, or village to which he happens to be appointed, and it is his duty to call out the levies in time of war.

In this fighting machine there are of course constant irregularities, as there must always be where an institution depends on the powers, caprices, and necessities of an individual rather than on an established order. But courage, activity, frugality, and, above all, the natural cunning of the Abyssinian soldier go far to remedy such defects. He does not, like the Dervish, rush across the open plain spear in hand against trenches full of men

and magazine-rifles. He understands the efficacy of modern weapons, and takes cover during his advance. He is a good shot and does not waste cartridges, for until lately there were so few in Abyssinia that they were usually kept, for safety, in a church. As recently as the year 1890 only about one warrior out of every two possessed a firearm, and the usual allowance of cartridges served out before an engagement was only thirty-five to forty per rifle. Consequently there were no volleys and very little firing at long ranges. But even this scarcity of armament has some advantages. The Abyssinian loved his weapon. He was a proud man on the day that he obtained a Remington, which was his favourite pattern, and which he called a Senadir, under the firm impression that it was a Snider. In fact, as an Italian officer relates, so great was his care of it, so constant his cleaning of the various parts and so frequent his snapping it off, to make sure of its being in working order, that occasionally he ended by entirely ruining the weapon.<sup>1</sup>

We may perhaps smile at their innocence in the matter of firearms, but when it comes to cold steel they can probably afford to smile at many of us; for although they have nothing comparable to the European systems of fencing, yet almost every man knows something of the use of the sword, spear, and shield.

Their swords they keep at all times carefully greased and sharpened, and laugh at the metal scabbards of European officers which they consider only calculated to destroy the edge and preserve the rust. Neither, oddly enough, do they approve of the

bayonet. "At a distance," they say, "we fight with a rifle, or at close quarters with a sword; a bayonet is only a hindrance."

Having thus shortly touched on the organisation and armament of the Abyssinian, it may be well to ask what manner of fighting man he is. In the first place he is not so tall as an Englishman, and in all probability not so strong. He is also, like most members of the less civilised races, more subject to excitement and discouragement than a European. But his activity and endurance are extraordinary. He often goes from camp to camp without a halt, and this at a wonderfully rapid pace. The native infantry-men of Italy, for the most part Abyssinian by birth, consider about twenty-six miles an ordinary day's march. On one occasion during the Italo-Abyssinian war a column about a thousand strong covered one hundred and fifteen miles through a hostile country in three days ten hours and a half, though compelled to fight an engagement by the way, and hampered during the last two days by a number of women and wounded men. Throughout the whole of that war it was assumed by Italian generals as a basis of their calculations that the Abyssinian could out-march the European. This was one of the arguments that persuaded General Baratieri to offer battle at Adowa,—that if he retired the Shoans could always overtake him, and probably compel him to fight on ground of their own choosing.

The ceremony of calling out the levies for war is one of some solemnity. In the camps, and in the market places of towns the big war-drum, or *negarit*, is brought out; the flags are flying and every man wears his mantle, as if in presence of the King. The roll is beaten forty-five times at long intervals (the whole

<sup>1</sup> ETIOPIA, NOTIZIE RACCOLTE DAL PROF. GIUSEPPE SAPETO; officially published by the Head-Quarters Staff of Italy. I have made frequent use of it throughout this essay.

auage as it is called, lasting about two hours<sup>1</sup>), and the King's officer reads a proclamation aloud. The following is one issued by Menelik before proceeding on one of his *zemetshas*, or marauding expeditions. "Feed and fatten well your horses and mules, prepare the red pepper, salt and other provisions, and be at Entotto, all of you on the day of Abbô after Easter week. He who does not hearken to these words of mine will be punished by the confiscation of his goods."

These *zemetshas* are not so serious as real war; they are merely extensive plundering expeditions common enough in all Abyssinia, but which in Shoa took place only twice a year, usually in March and October, and were generally directed against some miserable unoffending Galla tribe from whom the Shoans claimed tribute. The form that they took was, practically speaking, that of a gigantic national picnic in the country of the unfortunate enemy, twenty or thirty thousand women and children accompanying the warriors. A clean sweep was made of the inhabitants who, not powerful enough to resist, only tried to make their escape. The Shoans often returned home with from sixty to a hundred thousand head of cattle and countless prisoners, many of whom perished of exhaustion on the road without anyone caring. This method of warfare, however unusual it may sound, was almost identical with that employed by the army which defeated the Italians. During the campaign of Adowa it is estimated that Menelik's troops were accompanied by thirty or forty thousand non-combatants. It was only

the extraordinary activity of both men and women that enabled his force to retain its mobility.

Nor is their frugality less remarkable. They can subsist on a few small unleavened cakes made out of some handfuls of grain crushed between two stones. There being no commissariat every man provides for himself. Before starting he makes a small provision of barley, dura, beans, &c., and straps the whole of it on to a donkey belonging to a peasant. He thus has a store of which before returning he will probably devour every particle, including most of the donkey. But this is a subject that has often been dealt with; what has not been noticed is, that for his great effort of 1896, Menelik made some incipient attempts at organising a commissariat. It will be interesting to learn from the experience in our coming campaign what advance he may have made in this department.

The Emperor Theodore was the first ruler who endeavoured to substitute a standing force of the European model for the old feudal system on which, as I have said, the Abyssinian army is practically based. This remarkable man realised to the full the value of modern inventions. He was an enthusiast about artillery, and in his early days had endeavoured to make guns by hollowing out the trunk of a tree and binding it round with bands of iron. It seems a childish idea; yet the field pieces (known as Sandy's Stoups, from the name of their inventor Alexander Hamilton) with which the Scotch Covenanters made the memorable passage of the Tyne in 1640 were hardly less primitive. During the latter years of his life Theodore had collected nearly forty guns of different kinds, some of them constructed by European prisoners whom he forced to make them, although for this work

<sup>1</sup> In case of need the ceremony is performed far more quickly; the rapidity with which an armed force can be assembled is, in fact, one of the most notable features of the Abyssinian army.

they had neither knowledge nor training. As regards small-arms, he found it difficult to get any except the old arquebuses.

Incessant warfare continued throughout his tempestuous reign, but being chiefly of the nature of civil strife its incidents hardly come within the scope of this essay; nor can the British Expedition of 1868 be said to do so, for although a most successful piece of work, it effected its object without any very serious fighting. With the exception of a few thousand men who remained faithful at the risk of their lives, all Abyssinia rejoiced at the fall of this half-insane sovereign.

His successor, John, having been the friend of the English, was left by them in possession of a good nucleus of rifles and artillery. He was also able to obtain the services of an ex-serjeant in the British army, named Kirkham, who made some attempts at introducing European discipline. But in this he failed. As Mr. Wylde (who for so many years has been in constant touch with Abyssinian affairs) expresses it: "The Abyssinians used to look on Kirkham's drill lessons as a huge joke, and the drill ground used to be crammed with men and children looking on and passing uncomplimentary remarks and imitating those that were being instructed." He succeeded, however, in raising a disciplined force of some three hundred black men (refugees from the Soudan), who did good service.<sup>1</sup> To his advice also is attributed the decisive victory of John with only twelve thousand men over his most important rival Gobasiè who had sixty thousand. When it became known that Gobasiè was advancing to the attack, Kirkham advised his master

to draw up their small army on the side of a mountain. Here, owing to the nature of the ground, he could post his riflemen in successive tiers, all commanding the plain below, where stood Gobasiè's men "like a forest of spears." The result can easily be imagined; only the first two ranks of Gobasiè's troops could return the fire. Men began to fall on all sides: "Here," said the Abyssinian who related the story, striking the ground with the butt end of his javeline, "here the King knelt on the ground, immovable and despising all danger, picking off his enemies, and every bullet carrying death with it." Gobasiè soon found his losses were becoming serious. He attempted to advance but his attack was repulsed, and the Tigréans by a sudden charge converted the defeat into a rout. This victory practically assured John's accession to the imperial throne.

The fall of Gobasiè occurred in 1869. During the next four or five years we find John in constant hostility to Menelik who was now his only formidable rival. Indeed Shoa has more than once been a source of weakness to the Abyssinian empire. It cherishes a tradition of independence, and has during most of the nineteenth century stood apart from the other provinces. Menelik himself has not hesitated to make alliances with Italy against the rest of Ethiopia, or even to refuse his assistance against the infidel Dervishes. His patriotism, until he became Negus Nagasti, was bounded by the frontiers of Shoa; but within those frontiers he has proved himself an able and progressive ruler. His strength lies in the fact that he is beloved by his own southern people, the Shoans, who are after all as numerous as the inhabitants of any

<sup>1</sup> MODERN ABYSSINIA; by Augustus B. Wylde.

<sup>1</sup> Raffray's VOYAGE EN ABYSSINIE.

two of the other provinces. And that he genuinely loves his fatherland no one could doubt, if it were only after reading the proclamation that he issued when threatened with invasion by John.

Oh people of Shoa, listen, listen.

Hitherto I have done all that was possible to assure the tranquillity of my native land and for this I have exacted many sacrifices of my people. But all in vain; let the example of Gojjam enlighten you.

Let every man who has a lance, and every man who has marched even once against the Gallas, join the assembly on the day of the feast of our saint (Bal-node).

To-day it is not a question of seizing cattle from the Gallas, but of defending all you possess, your wife, your sons, your old men; better, then, to die on the frontiers than to lose everything. I have neither brothers nor sons; my fatherland is my son; my fatherland is my brother. I will set the example by fighting and dying at the frontier of my country.

I desire my people to make one more sacrifice; to give provisions for a month to the soldiers and to take in those who are sick.

But let no one remain at home who is able to start. And if anyone should stay, let him be called by the name of woman, let his wife enter into possession of all his substance and become head of the house; let him be considered a woman.

The rivalry between Menelik and John continued with no decisive results until the latter was killed on the day of his great victory over the Dervishes at Metemmeh (or Gallabat) in 1889. But in the meanwhile his country had been invaded by two Egyptian armies (in 1875 and 1876) both of which he destroyed, thereby acquiring between ten and fifteen thousand Remingtons, some Krupp guns, and a large supply of ammunition. This marks another and a serious step forward on the path from ancient to modern warfare, from

steel to lead, from close quarters to long range.

Passing over the next eleven years we come to the exploit that will form the closing event of this essay, for it is the first occasion on which Abyssinia found herself in serious conflict with a European power. In 1887 there broke out the lesser of the two wars with Italy. Of the second, the campaign of Adowa in 1896, I refrain from speaking, as I have treated elsewhere of all its varying phases.<sup>1</sup> That second war may indeed be called the outcome of the first, and the culminating point of the long struggle against Italy which began at Dogali; and much as one admires the cleverness with which Menelik drew to himself during its latter years the semi-independent chiefs, and the way in which he has formed an united Ethiopia, yet assuredly those who fought against him have no cause for despondency. Mismanagement there was, such that it could not be redeemed by the courage of the soldiers. But Italy might well take as her motto and her consolation the words that General Dabormida wrote home during the course of the campaign,—words that have proved so singularly true of himself, and of all who like him held out to the end and died on the field of disaster: "We may perhaps be unfortunate, but we shall most certainly do no dishonour to our country. And even if we were all to lay our bones in Africa, the sacrifice would not be fruitless for our nation, which has already been to so great an extent re-tempered by the heroic example of those who preceded us." When he wrote this he was thinking doubtless of the men who fought at Dogali.

It was in 1885 that the Italians landed at Massowah, a port always

<sup>1</sup> THE CAMPAIGN OF ADOWA AND THE RISE OF MENELIK.

claimed by the Emperors of Abyssinia. That they were bent on expansion there can be no doubt; but in any case the possession of Massowah alone could have been of little use to them. They were certain therefore sooner or later to fall foul of Abyssinia, for it was not to be supposed that so successful a warrior as the Emperor John would view with equanimity any encroachment on his territory, or that a man of Ras Alula's character would be disposed to forego the chance of war.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the whole year of 1886 one event after another had occurred to enrage the Ras and his master. In the first place there was the Kantibai incident. A chief of the Habab tribes had placed himself under Italian protection. This was regarded as an insult by Alula, for the chief was an old enemy of his and the protectorate established was probably directed against him. Secondly the Negus was infuriated by the non-arrival of the embassy from King Humbert, which had been solemnly promised a year before, but had never been sent. This was due to the fact that a letter from John had been intercepted, in which he expressed so bitter a hatred towards the Italians that it was thought unsafe to allow a white man to visit him.

<sup>1</sup> Ras Alula was the generalissimo of John's army, and was probably the greatest leader that Africa has produced for many centuries. From nothing he had risen to be the right hand man of the Negus. Against the Egyptians he had distinguished himself both in 1875 and 1876. In 1885 he destroyed a Dervish army at Kuft; and against the Italians he proved the most formidable of all Ethiopian leaders. At Dogali, at the desperate struggle beneath Amba Alagi, and at the siege of Fort Macalle he was their most formidable antagonist, while the defeat of Adowa was largely due to him.

<sup>2</sup> This letter came from Shoa. It has been suggested that its appearance may have been due to a stroke of Menelik's diplomacy. He was anxious that John should quarrel with Italy.

While matters were thus in a very critical condition, two further events brought the quarrel to a head. An unofficial engineering expedition under Count Salimbeni had obtained leave from Ras Alula to pass through his territory on its way to the western province of Gojjam, where the engineers of the party had agreed with King Tecla Aimanot to erect a bridge over the Blue Nile. But Alula, while giving them the pass had insisted on their halting at his village of Asmara that he might have the opportunity of seeing them. It was during this halt that General Gené happened to advance some troops into the village of Ua. The movement had no hostile intention; it was merely intended to form a basis of action against a few bands of marauders, and to obtain possession of the wells of Ua; yet for Italy it was the most important event during many years, as it led directly to her conflicts with Abyssinia. Ras Alula of course regarded it as a fresh encroachment. No words or gifts of Count Salimbeni or of the other explorers could pacify him; and when shortly afterwards he discovered that two of the Italians were no engineers but officers of the army his fury knew no bounds. He imprisoned the whole party and threatened to behead them, probably regarding the officers as spies sent out to prepare the way for future invasion. General Gené wrote to him demanding their release, to which Alula replied on January 12th, 1887, by sending him an ultimatum. The Italians were, he said, to renounce all intercourse with Habab, and to evacuate Ua by January 21st; "Otherwise know that our friendship has ceased."

This meant war, the beginning of a struggle that lasted for over nine years. On January 25th, Ras Alula moved forward against the fortifica-

tions of Saati which were under the command of Major Boretti. Having surrounded the place he advanced apparently to the attack, but his enemies were too strongly posted to be dislodged, and he was driven back with a loss (according to Italian figures) of two hundred killed and wounded. The Italians lost only five killed and three wounded, and for a day there was great rejoicing over their victory. Since then, however, they have had reason to believe that this movement of Ras Alula's was merely a reconnaissance in force, which went farther than he intended, owing probably to his men getting out of hand. The following is the description of the action given in the official handbook issued by the Head-Quarter Staff of Italy, and it proves, I think, that even in those early days the Abyssinians had a considerable understanding of war.

Ras Alula made a reconnaissance against the fort of Saati. He could not have made better dispositions or have conducted the reconnaissance with greater coolness or foresight.

He proceeded first to the right of his line, keeping himself and his troops out of artillery range from the fort. Then he sent out many bold horsemen to make a demonstration near the fort, in order to unmask its fire, after which, keeping the defenders in check with partial attacks and feints against their front, he gave orders for a column to file past between Saati and Moncullo, the strong column with which Colonel de Cristoforis's detachment came into collision on the following day.

Having thus got his men between Saati and the relieving force Ras Alula could confidently await the morrow. A battalion of five hundred men, accompanied by some fifty irregulars (Bashibazouks) and two machine guns, moving with a convoy to Boretti's assistance, marched straight into the trap laid for them

by Alula. At the first rifle-shot the head of the column was met and stopped by some of the Abyssinian cavalry. While the Italians were taking up their positions on a hill beside the road, Alula's men were gradually surrounding them in two immense concentric circles, of which the inner one was intended for the attack, and the outer one to form the reserve. Between the two, just in rear of the firing line, stood Ras Alula giving orders; his first care was to send a body of cavalry about three hundred strong to cut off the retreat of his enemy and to prevent the arrival of reinforcements.

The story of how the Italians fought and died has more than once been related. At first, advancing in echelon, they gained ground; then their machine guns jammed, and finally, in the words of Count Salimbeni, who was dragged out of the Abyssinian camp to witness his fellow-countrymen's defeat: "A little after one o'clock the Ras gave the signal for the attack; the drums and tambourines did not stop beating for a moment, and suddenly, on all sides as if they were springing out of the ground, a torrent of men dashed forward to the attack, the cavalry charged the side of the hill, and in a few minutes all was over." This story is celebrated; but there is a curious record of one of the survivors which is preserved by an Italian officer, and which has rather an unusual interest. The narrator was an *ascari* (native soldier) in an Italian regiment, and Major Gamerra, who knew him, has apparently accepted his description without reserve.<sup>1</sup> He was a Mahomedan of Ghedaref, and regarded the

<sup>1</sup> *FRA GLI ASCARI*; by Major G. Gamerra, an officer formerly of the Bersaglieri, who commanded the 8th Native Battalion at the battle of Adowa, and has made a collection of stories gathered from the natives.

Dervishes as his fellow-countrymen. Major Gamerra introduces his tale (which is in parts somewhat peculiar) in the following manner.

It was at Dogali, where I had betaken myself on the first anniversary of that sad and memorable battle, that Mohammed-Idris seeing me overcome by melancholy thoughts said to me: "Why are you sad? Do you think of your dead brothers and mourn for them or do you envy them? Perhaps you envy them because they are in the paradise of Allah, in the paradise of the brave; but then why are you sad? To-day it is your turn, to-morrow it is mine. And who knows whether in a few days you and I will not be in paradise with them. Or are you sad because your brothers are not yet revenged? They will be; have you not come here for that purpose? But you are few in number as yet; do you know? Too few. And the Abyssinians are so many, as many as the grains of sand. Eh, I know it. You do not believe it, or you think you can fight one against ten or one against a hundred; and you are wrong. One must be strong in numbers, more so than the enemy or at least equally numerous, and then Allah judges who is to win; but if you are few, Allah does not protect you because it is you who tempt him—you who put yourselves on the losing side.

"Last year, here, on this very spot I said to another white man, who had only just come from Italy, that the Abyssinians, whom I had already seen, were as many as the grains of sand, and that it was expedient to return to Monkullo. He did not understand or did not want to understand me, and I took up a handful of sand and little stones, and threw it with strength over three or four ants, which were killed or crushed. And do you know what that brother of yours said to me? 'Hold your tongue, you ugly black-snout; we are not *vigliacchi* (cowards) like you.' I was accustomed to hear myself called an ugly black-snout, and I did not know what *vigliacco* meant; so I held my tongue and loaded my rifle.

"Meanwhile the fifty Bashi-bazouks who were exploring the ground on the front and flanks of the column, signalled the enemy on the left, and wanted to halt, but were ordered to continue their march and pass the Abyssinians of Ras

Alula, posted behind the mountain that you see. And Alula let them go on, and sent for all his people who were a short distance away.

"Meanwhile the Colonel called up all the officers and spoke to them. I do not know what he said, but after a few words they all drew their swords and returned to the soldiers. I had fought often, but it was the first time that I found myself about to do so together with white men. I did not understand the orders, and I did not understand why, instead of scattering themselves, your brothers pressed close in, one beside the other. I did not understand why all were doing the same thing at the same time. I was thinking about this when, after a short ringing word of command, I heard a noise like a clap of thunder; it was a company firing its first greeting to the enemy. I looked at the Abyssinians, who were not replying to the fire, and saw that very few of them had fallen. I thought then that you Italians have so many cartridges that you can afford to waste them, while in Abyssinia there too few of them and they are considered precious. The Bashi-bazouks also began to fire, but with great coolness, and by slow degrees they retired towards the white men. Meanwhile the Abyssinians were approaching us cautiously, concealing themselves behind trees and bushes trying to surround us; and our men thought then, perhaps too late, of retiring on to the hill behind them where you now see that cross, and where all, or almost all died. But your brothers, though they stand firm as a rock under fire,—so much so that the Abyssinians after Dogali believed that the Italian leaders chained their men to the ground during the fight—move badly with their boots made of leather and iron, and so Ras Alula's men caught them up on the slope and killed many of them with blows of lances and swords. Soon after that the Abyssinians began to shoot and we found ourselves in the centre of a circle of iron and fire that was gradually narrowing round us.

"One by one the Italians fall and with them the Bashi-bazouks. I had not fired even one shot until then, because it was useless; but being now face to face with death, I wanted to avenge myself and your men. I went over to the Colonel, near whom was the man that had called

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that this is said to have been actually done by Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir.

me ugly black-snout and coward, and who was now wounded in the arm but continued to fire desperately. He glanced at me and said; 'You were right, poor Ali.' I fired seven shots and then felt my whole face bathed in blood and my eyes full of it; it was an Abyssinian who had given me a sword-cut on the forehead. Nevertheless I had the strength to fire a last round at him and then let myself fall to the ground. That sword-cut was my salvation, for the enemy thought me dead and either forgot me or did not want to bother about me. But I was alive, and so much alive that that very evening I arrived at Monkullo and proceeded at once to make a report on the matter to my superiors."

Of the Italians, who were five hundred and nine strong, four hundred and eighteen were killed, and ninety-one escaped, all of them wounded, their escape being apparently due to the fact that the enemy did not trouble to make an end of all the wounded. Ras Alula was in command of about twenty thousand men, but of these the greater number were only armed with sticks or heavy swords and a shield.

A day or two later Major Boretti succeeded in effecting a retreat from Saati. In the following year the Emperor John was killed at the moment of his great victory over the Dervishes; and then, when Menelik and the Italians were despoiling the unfortunate country which his strong hand had kept against all invaders, then probably was composed the lament that some three years later was heard and written down by an Italian lady.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Signora Vivaldi Pianavia, in her book *TRE ANNI IN ERITREA*.

How is it with you, oh King, oh our King?

Oh women of Enderta, weep and be sad,

Oh women of Wouggerat, weep and be sad,

Oh women of Tembien weep and be sad; for under him, instead of being in rags you were well clothed with a shamma, instead of going on foot you rode on a horse.

Thou hast subdued the peoples by the mere renown of thy name.

Better would it have been if thou hadst not fought at Metemma.

Better would it have been if thou hadst never gone thither, oh King, oh our King.

It is in its bearing on the future history of Ethiopia that the true interest of the expedition against the Mullah centres. Is she continuing to civilise? Is she keeping pace with the times? Our officers who serve with Menelik's force ought to be able to form a shrewd opinion on this point.

The future of Abyssinia depends on her civilising at this moment, before Africa is definitely annexed by the commerce, politics, and administrative ideas of the various European nations that have hitherto only marked her out into Spheres of Influence. Some authorities are of opinion that on Menelik's death she will relapse into the civil strife from which he has rescued her. Others think that she will not be able to make sufficient progress to hold her own in the race. But there are yet others who believe that her name has already been added to the list of modern nations.

G. F. H. BERKELEY.